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ABSTRACT

This Senate hearing received testimony expressing the concern that Alaska Native languages are dying, and suggesting ways to stimulate and improve Native language instruction in schools and community settings. The director of the Alaska Native Language Center (University of Alaska, Fairbanks) provided information about the history of suppression of Native languages in Alaska schools. Of 20 Native languages, only Central Yupik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik are still spoken by children. Village and tribal elders, chiefs, teachers, students, and parents discussed the following issues: the loss of cultures as children cannot speak with grandparents; the shared childhood experience of being punished in school for speaking Native languages; the need to train fluent Native speakers as language teachers and then pay them and treat them as professionals; the possibility of allowing Native languages to substitute for "foreign" languages in the curriculum; the need for Native language instructional materials; the importance of allowing Native peoples to design school language programs; and suggestions for community programs of language and culture. All witnesses supported proposed federal legislation to fund: construction of language facilities, community language programs, programs to train Native speakers as teachers, production of instructional materials, programs to train Alaska Natives to produce Native language television and radio programs, and efforts to record and preserve Native languages. Appendices contain letters supporting S. 1595, lists of the status of 20 Alaska Native languages, and instructional materials available in Yupik. (SV)

S. HRG. 102-557

ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGES PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 1991

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ED349131

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

S. 1595

TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF ALASKA NATIVES TO SPEAK AND UNDERSTAND THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGES

OCTOBER 19, 1991
ANCHORAGE, AK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGES PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 1991

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1991

U.S. SENATE,
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Anchorage, AK

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m. in the Egan Center, Lower Level, Summit Hall, Space 4, Anchorage, Alaska, Hon. Frank H. Murkowski (acting chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senator Murkowski.

STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. I welcome those of you who are here, and would invite you all to sit down. There is lots of room up front.

This is an official hearing of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs of the U.S. Senate, sitting in Anchorage, AK, this day. The official reporter from Washington, DC, Mel Jones, is here. He hasn't seen snow lately, but he is probably going to get as much here as he will get in Washington, DC all winter.

On my right is Jenny Linkous of my staff. Jenny is on the Select Committee on Indian Affairs and my staff in Washington, DC. She has been up all week attending the convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives. Who else do we have here that needs an introduction?

Jim Deagen is in the back there. Jim is on my staff here in Anchorage, AK. He works on many of the activities as well. Linda Schaffer, who just went out, is also on my staff. What we would like to do during the hearing is pass around a sheet of paper, and we would like to have you put your name and address down, because we would like to send you a transcript of the hearing.

And we would like to of course invite your input on what we think is one of the most important pending bills affecting the ability of Alaska's Native community to maintain a visible and communicative liaison with the basic roots, if you will, of your culture, by maintaining your languages.

So we welcome you to this hearing. The hearing covers S. 1595. You are going to hear a lot about that number. It's called the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991. I really don't know why we had to give it such a long name, but sometimes we do those things.

[Text of S. 1595 follows:]

102D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1595

To preserve and enhance the ability of Alaska Natives to speak and understand their native languages.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 31 (legislative day, JULY 8), 1991

Mr. MURKOWSKI introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Select Committee on Indian Affairs

---

A BILL

To preserve and enhance the ability of Alaska Natives to speak and understand their native languages.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991".

SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM.

The Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2991) is amended by adding after section 803A the following new section:

"SEC. 803B. GRANT PROGRAM TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award grants to any—

"(1) Alaska Native village;

"(2) consortium of Alaska Native villages; or

"(3) regional corporation established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.),

that is selected pursuant to subsection (c), for the purposes of enhancing, encouraging, preserving, and facilitating the ability of Alaska Natives to speak their native languages, and to preserve and expand knowledge about such languages.

"(b) IN PARTICULAR.—The specific purposes for which grants awarded under subsection (a) may be used include, but are not limited to—

"(1) the construction of new facilities or the conversion of existing facilities into centers for the preservation and enhancement of Alaska Native languages;

"(2) the establishment of community language programs to bring older and younger Alaska Natives together to facilitate the transfer of language skills from one generation to another;

"(3) the establishment of training programs to train speakers of Alaska Native languages to teach such languages to others;

"(4) the drafting and printing of materials to be used for the teaching and enhancement of Alaska Native languages;

"(5) the establishment or support of training programs to train Alaska Natives to produce or participate in television or radio programs to be broadcast in their native languages; and

"(6) the compilation of oral testimony to record or preserve Alaska Native languages.

"(c) APPLICATIONS.—Grants shall be awarded on the basis of applications that are submitted by any of the entities described in subsection (a) to the Secretary in such form as the Secretary shall prescribe, but the applications shall, at a minimum, include—

"(1) a detailed description of the project for which a grant is sought; and

"(2) a statement demonstrating that a principle objective of the project is to preserve or enhance the knowledge or use of Alaska Native languages.

"(d) AMOUNT OF FUNDING.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the costs of programs that are awarded grants pursuant to this section shall be paid in accordance with the following paragraphs:

"(1) 90 PERCENT OF COSTS.—The grants awarded pursuant to this section shall provide funding for not more than 90 percent of the costs of the programs that are recipients of such grants.

"(2) REMAINING 10 PERCENT OF COSTS.—The remaining 10 percent of the costs of programs that are awarded grants under this section shall be paid by the grant recipient either in cash or through the provision of property or services.

"(3) LIMITATION ON FUNDS TO PAY THE REMAINING 10 PERCENT OF COSTS.—The amount referred to in paragraph (2) may originate from any source (including any Federal agency) other than a program, contract, or grant authorized under this Act.

"(e) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall administer grants under this section through the Administration for Native Americans.".

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 816 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992d) is amended—

(1) by striking out "sections 803(d) and 803A" each place it appears and inserting in lieu thereof "sections 803(d), 803A, and 803B"; and

(2) by adding at the end thereof the following new subsection:

"(e) There are authorized to be appropriated $2,500,000 for each of the fiscal years 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, and 1996, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of section 803(B) of this Act.".

○

Senator MURKOWSKI. We appreciate those of you who are here to present your views on this legislation of the needs of Alaska's communities to maintain that liaison with that language. One of the things I think is so interesting is the indigenous languages of Alaska, how many there are, and the realization that they really face a very critical time frame if we are going to do anything to save them.

We can sit back and watch them die slowly over the next century, as we have done, or we can try to pull them back from the brink of extinction with dedication and hard work. And I am glad to see so many of you are here to begin that process today.

The front line for the battle to save these languages will be the families and communities of rural Alaska, those of you who are in this room. When I introduced this bill, it was in response to concerns some of the Natives expressed in the Alaska Native brotherhood and Alaska Native sisterhood in Southeastern Alaska who suggested that the Tlingit language was dying, that the young people no longer spoke it, that most of the people who spoke the language were over 50, and could we do anything about that problem.

By introducing the legislation, what we have attempted to do here is address the concerns of a lot of Alaskans that the Native languages are dying, and that with that loss might come the death of the Native cultures as well, and what can we do about it. I think we are all aware that languages are not just unique ways of communicating, they really represent a very significant fabric of the social order of the people.

For Alaska's Natives that order was, I think, disturbed when a misguided Federal policy forced Alaskan Native people to give up their Native languages and much of their culture to live in the modern world under the mandate that English was the only language. We are not suggesting that English isn't the language of the land, but that the English language is not the language of your heritage or your culture.

So for Alaska Natives, that order can be rectified by action. The loss of Native language skills certainly has reduced the ability of some to function with relation to the roots of their Native culture, and the transition to the western culture. Children who cannot speak with their parents and grandparents really run the risk of losing the cultural and moral guidance that they traditionally afford.

I think it's fair to say that many Native people feel the loss. And I think this has helped to lead some of the difficulties in communities and families where people have said "Well, who are we?" If you have that language, you know who you are. You know what you are a part of. You have that heritage and that cultural communication.

So we hope that by preserving Alaska's Native languages as living languages instead of dying languages, that the Native cultures, the individuals who have lost touch with those cultures, can be brought back and be helped.

Many Alaska Natives tell me that speaking their indigenous language is a part of maintaining the integrity of the pride of the people. And it certainly is. Weakened cultural ties, create to some extent, some of the problems in some of the village life with the young people. And now we are seeing Alaska Natives coming together to stop the disintegration, if you will, of their cultures and communities.

Fluency in English, as I said, is still an essential ingredient for success, but that is not the purpose of this hearing. We are not suggesting that we reduce the influence and the necessity of English, by any means. But Alaska Natives, I think, should have a chance to have that cultural bridge that language provides. That's why I introduced the legislation.

This hearing was arranged specifically so that you as individual indigenous Native people of Alaska could express your opinions on how this bill and the problems of language preservation could be presented before this Select Committee on Indian Affairs. Your testimony is going to help me and other members of the committee address the issue more effectively and provide a record on how we can address the opportunities ahead of us with regard to Alaska's Native languages.

It is my hope that out of this collective input for this first hearing we can first of all determine from you whether you think it is important enough to proceed. I am going to introduce for the record at this time a statement concerning the specific languages that are spoken in Alaska, as much as we know about those languages from the standpoint of the number of people who are still speaking those languages, and the number of areas and regions where they are still spoken.

I think the Tundra Times had an interesting article—do you have that, Jenny? That article identified the 20 or so specific languages that we're considering here. When you testify, please indicate your particular knowledge and expertise with the languages that we are concerned with here. It will be very helpful for the record.

I assume what we are going to have to do is appeal to the linguistic capabilities we have in Alaska's academic community. I know the University of Alaska, Alaska Pacific University, and the regional corporations are all concerned with the capability of working out a system where your elders could come into the classroom structure and provide as almost an elective—language instruction.

You can wade through the bureaucracy, you can wade through my comments, but the question is, the University of Alaska doesn't know how to—they don't have anybody that can teach Yup'ik, to my knowledge. Is that right?

No; they have Yup'ik there. What am I thinking of? Down in Prince William Sound, it's Eyak. There are three people left. What do we do there? If you are going to try and keep that language surviving, you are going to have to rely on two or three of those people that can still speak it. You are going to have to have a collective effort by the people of the area that want to support the revitalization, if you will, of that language, Eyak.

So as we go through various areas across Alaska, we need to know if people are willing to volunteer, and then can the academic community, through the educational system, provide an environment where those people who are not trained teachers by any means can come in with trained teachers and somehow work in a coordinated manner so that this language which in most cases is not a written language can be taught.

This is what we are interested in hearing. I have talked long enough. First of all, we have three panels. I am going to try and limit you to 10 minutes each, and that will take us probably until 12:30.

The first panel is Georgianna Lincoln from Fairbanks; Dr. Michael Krauss, Director of the Alaska Native Language Center, and he knows more about this than I certainly do; James Nageak, Chairman of the Board of the Fairbanks Native Association; and Gary Moore, Community Resources Coordinator, Tanana Chiefs Conference, from Tok.

Thanks very much for being with us. Do you want to go first, Georgianna?

Ms. LINCOLN. It would be my pleasure.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF GEORGIANNA LINCOLN, STATE REPRESENTATIVE, FAIRBANKS, AK

Ms. LINCOLN. I am Representative Georgianna Lincoln. I represent District 24, which is a district of 49 villages. It is the largest district in Alaska, it is 800 by 600 miles. I would like to testify on S. 1595. I would first of all like to say, Senator Murkowski, that I applaud you for submitting this critical, important bill to us.

I say that because when I was out in those 49 villages in what I call my journey throughout all those villages, I was asking what was most important to them, what were some of the issues that they wanted me to address in the state legislature. And without exception, the Native language was always brought up, in every single village. I met with the youth in the schools, and they also said that independent of their parents.

I hadn't even realized that you were presenting S. 1595 when I was working on a bill to present to our state legislators and I presented and have in our House committee, which I cochair, State House Bill 352, for the Alaska Native language. I think it is complementary to yours. I am glad to see we were going in the same direction independently of one another.

When we had our testimony a few days ago on the House committee hearing for my bill, it was no different than what I was hearing in the villages. We had many of our youth that are here, village after village after village, that had very emotional testimony as well as the adults that were testifying, very emotional, that they could not go home and tell their grandparents and tell their mothers in their Native language what happened here at the AFN convention.

Over and over we hear that. The question then becomes how do we get our Native language out into the villages where it is taught as a language, and I hear your concerns. We have presently come of the villages with a satellite system, where they have a choice in language of Russian, Spanish, and Japanese that is taught via the satellite system.

I would submit that with our technology today we can also tap in where the students are not having to select between Spanish, Japanese, and Russian, that the fourth language be their language, and utilize that. When you say that through the university there is not a Yup'ik instructor there, at one time there was.

We have Yup'ik instructors in our villages, somewhere, that there would be a number of them, if they could even perhaps teach from that particular village via the satellite system. I think there are many things that can be done now through our computer systems in teaching the Native language. Certainly we use that for other languages, and there is no reason why we could not incorporate it into our system.

My mother spoke and understood the Koyukon Athabascan language thoroughly. My mother had seven children. I am here before you to tell you that not one of us seven can understand and speak our language fluently. We understand words, we can say words, but we can't speak in whole sentences and understand what people are saying.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And your language is not written?

Ms. LINCOLN. There is some written language, and I'm sure that Dr. Krauss will go into that. But there is some that is written, yes. I'm sure that others will talk about it, perhaps Dr. Krauss, about the American Indian Language Institute, which we were both at in Prince George, B.C., where there were approximately 1,200 Native people from throughout the United States and other countries that were talking about their indigenous language, that were also pleading—wherever we go, the Indian people are pleading with us to please help them to have their language survive.

I will yield any time I have left to the others on the panel, and I'm sure there are many, many experts out there, and I hope everybody has a chance to be heard today on what is not just language, as when we talk about subsistence, it isn't just food. language is our whole being. Language is our spiritual help. Language is our physical help. And without that, I'm afraid we are not whole people, when we have lost a part of us that is so critical to our survival.

I again applaud you, Senator Murkowski, for your insight into this, and for something that is so critical. If we as Alaska Natives can help you in the struggle to get this through the Senate and get it passed into law, I'm sure we will do whatever we can. Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Representative Lincoln. I think your testimony has been very helpful and very moving. I want to commend you on your ability to make your point in a brief manner. I would like to enter into the record your bill, State House Bill 352, in the Alaska Legislature, which has been introduced. I have reviewed and read it. This is the kind of hand-in-hand approach that is necessary for Federal Government as well.

[State House Bill 352 appears in appendix.]

Senator MURKOWSKI. I would just like to for the record identify—I believe you described your language as Koyukon Athabascan?

Ms. LINCOLN. Yes; the Koyukon Athabascan language.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And that would be addressed under—I'm reading from a little bulletin we put out in October, which is now identifying the status of Alaska's Native languages as near as we can get it. Dr. Krauss put it together. So you would identify with the Koyukon, of which I am told there are about 700 speakers. The youngest speaker is 30, and the estimated loss of that language would be the year 2035. Is that correct?

Ms. **Lincoln**. I'm sure that Dr. Krauss will be testifying on those statistics. I pray that 2035 is never going to be seen.

Senator **Murkowski**. I pray that your prayers are answered. Thank you very much.

Dr. Krauss, I am going to hold you as the last one, if you would. I think you most appropriately can probably sum it up. So we move next to James Nageak, Chairman of the Board of the Fairbanks Native Association.

Mr. **Nageak**. Thank you.

Senator **Murkowski**. Jim, we are going to keep doing well on the 10-minute time, so please proceed.

STATEMENT OF JAMES NAGEAK, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, FAIRBANKS NATIVE ASSOCIATION

Mr. **Nageak**. Thank you very much. My name is James Mumigaaluk Nageak. Aasiivvauvana qaikama quyanaagukkikpin uqaqtitchuminaqluna. Inupiat kaniqsillavluna qanuq uqaqama aasiitaimma kaniqsikaminna iglanaagutimignik qaitchivlutin.

Senator **Murkowski**. Our court reporter is going to have a little problem with that.

Mr. **Nageak**. I just wanted to make a point—

Senator **Murkowski**. You did.

Mr. **Nageak**. [continuing]. That there are people out there that can still understand me, fortunately. I am speaking the Inupiat language of the North Slope Borough of the Arctic Slope. I am originally from Barrow, but now I live in Fairbanks, AK. I am Assistant Professor now for the Inupiat language at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

I am not going to go into some of the activities of the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, because Dr. Krauss will be enlightening us on the work we do there at the University. But I come here as a representative of the Native people of Fairbanks. Just recently, I was elevated to become the Chairman of the Board of the Fairbanks Native Association.

In that association we are working on some of the problems and some of the things that we face in an urban setting when we come from a village like Anaktuvuk Pass, a village like Kaktovik, and we go into an urban setting and then we have a situation where we are dispersed in that big community.

One of the problems we have of course is to be able to get together as a part of Inupiat people, to be able to come together to begin to associate with the people that can understand us, people that can give us the shot in the arm, in a way. When we are working in an urban setting, we sometimes don't have much of an opportunity to use our language.

Therefore one of the things the Fairbanks Native Association is pushing for and has presented to the community of Fairbanks through the economic development center or the North Star Borough of Fairbanks, that a Native cultural center would be a vehicle in which the language and the culture of the people that are in an urban setting can begin to have their activities in a meaningful manner, where they can come together and become very active in sometimes preserving, sometimes maintaining, and sometimes teaching the language and their culture.

Therefore, the activities of the association are centered around seeing that a Native cultural center is put together in Fairbanks, where we can utilize it. As an instructor, a professor of the Inupiat language at the University, I can begin to utilize some kind of a structure, a facility, in which that can happen.

And I am glad to see that your Senate bill is addressing facilities to begin to be used for maintaining preserving the language and the culture of the indigenous people. And I'm sure that you know there are other agencies within the U.S. Government and the State of Alaska that have the same kind of purpose in trying to see this. The economic development administrations have some kinds of activities that relate to the language and to the cultures of the Native people of Alaska. Housing and Urban Development has some activities.

I have been reading about some of the activities that the National Park Service is working on with the museum, and trying to preserve the language through that medium. Therefore, I think that the Senate bill you have introduced is going to enhance and make it in a lot of ways a meaningful experience for those of us that are trying to do something, trying to teach and preserve our language and culture.

So I thank you for an opportunity to be able to have conversation with you this morning, and also to be a part of a process in which something can be done to preserve the languages, so that in the year 2055 we will be able to see some revitalization of the Native languages that have in some way diminished.

Thank you.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much, Mr. Nageak. Let me just ask you one or two questions, because you mentioned the idea of a Native cultural center. That is fine for the urban areas. Say you had one in Fairbanks that addressed the urban opportunities.

But moving out into the area where your language is traditionally spoken, we need to have a method to somehow, either through the responsibility of the Native cultural center moving its expertise out to the villages so it can be taught and maintained, or it has to be structured under some responsible agency to ensure that it just isn't available in a rural setting or an urban setting. We have to be able to bridge the two.

Now, Representative Lincoln has suggested the satellite capability. I would be interested, as we progress in the hearing, as to whether you think that is a viable alternative, and what kinds of communications capabilities we have to try and reach the areas where the language traditionally would be appropriate, vis-a-vis other areas where another language would be appropriate. I'm sure we can get into that area with Dr. Krauss, but if you have any suggestions—

Mr. **Nageak**. I neglected to state that back in 1971, when I became a student at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks that the University was just beginning to think that maybe we ought to teach the Inupiat language at the University of Alaska. Therefore, Michael Krauss, Dr. Krauss, was the director for the newly-formed Alaska Native Language Center at that time, 20 years ago, about the same time that the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act came into being.

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. That's important, but at the same time, if you are going to start languages, most linguists tell me you want to start as young as you can.

Mr. **NAGEAK**. Right. I have a son. I was a board member for the North Slope School District when he was born. I became the president of that board, and I challenged the school district that if my son came to the school in 6 years, would they be able to speak to him in the language that I will be teaching him as he is growing up from the year 0 to the age of 6?

That was the challenge I gave the community and the North Slope School District in the year 1982. Now he is 9 years old. It is a conscientious effort as a parent to even begin to think and speak the Inupiat language when your lifestyle, and when you are working in the situations where the English language is used.

But we have had an opportunity as a center to teach Native students that are coming into the university system, and we have some people in here that have taken the courses at the University and have gone back to their communities and begun to teach and be a force in which an organization or an organizational structure that can use the resources that are in the local situation.

And of course, the elders, and the land, the structures that are out there in the communities, those are the things we are trying to see that they go back home and teach the ones that are losing their language. If they are not losing it, maybe they are just speaking it, they have some vocabulary words, then they begin to be taught to use those vocabulary words in a way that they can make sense in that particular world.

So I am happy to report that there are some students that have done that, Ruth Sampson that I see back here, I think she will testify later one, is one of the products of that situation.

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. Thank you. I appreciate your testimony, Jim Nageak, Chairman of the Board of Fairbanks Native Association. Next will be Gary Moore, but before Mr. Moore testifies, for any of you who haven't got this little—well, it's a newsletter, but it has 2 pages on the status of Alaska's Native languages by each region, and it covers the 20 languages that Dr. Krauss has identified, it might help in your following this process as we identify each witness with his or her traditional language.

So if Jim Deagen—do most of you have one of these? Jim, why don't you go through and pass out what is back there, because we want to make sure that those that are interested can kind of follow on the best educated guess of Dr. Krauss as to how the areas are covered. I commend you for identifying them. That was a great service.

We will put this in the transcript at this point.

[Material follows:]

Status of Alaska Native Languages, estimated from a 1980 paper by Dr. Michael E. Krauss, Director, Alaska Native Language Center, reproduced from Senator Murkowski's October 1991 newsletter, follows:

TSIMSHIAN—Speakers: 200; youngest speaker: Fifties; est. date of loss: 2015.

HAIDA—Speakers: 100; youngest speaker: Fifties; est. date of loss: 2015.

TLINGIT—Speakers: 2,000; youngest speaker: Forties; est. date of loss: 2030.

EYAK—Speakers: 3; youngest speaker: Seventies; est. date of loss: 2000.

AHTNA—Speakers: 200; youngest speaker: Thirties; est. date of loss: 2030.

TANAINA—Speakers: 250; youngest speaker: Teens; est. date of loss: 2055.

INGALIK—Speakers: 100; youngest speaker: Thirties; est. date of loss: 2030.

HOLIKACHUK—Speakers: 25; youngest speaker: Fifties; est. date of loss: 2015.

KOYUKON—Speakers: 700; youngest speaker: Thirties; est. date of loss: 2035.

UPPER KUSKOKWIM—Speakers: 140; youngest speaker: Children; est. date of loss: 2055.

TANANA—Speakers: 100; youngest speaker: Fifties; est. date of loss: 2015.

TANACROSS—Speakers: 100; youngest speaker: Teens; est. date of loss: 2055.

UPPER TANANA—Speakers: 250; youngest speaker: Teens; est. date of loss: 2055.

HAN—Speakers: 20; youngest speaker: Thirties; est. date of loss: 2030.

KUTCHIN—Speakers: 700; youngest speaker: Teens; est. date of loss: 2055.

ALEUT—Speakers: 700; youngest speaker: Twenties; est. date of loss: indefinite.

ALUTIIQ—Speakers: 1,000; youngest speaker: Teens; est. date of loss: 2055.

CENTRAL YUPIK—Speakers: 14,000; youngest speaker: Children; est. date of loss: indefinite.

SIBERIAN YUPIK—Speakers: 1,000; youngest speaker: Children; est. date of loss: indefinite.

INUPIAQ—Speakers: 5,000; youngest speaker: Teens; est. date of loss: 2055.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Let's go with Gary Moore, Community Resource Coordinator, Tanana Chiefs Conference, from Tok. Gary, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF GARY MOORE, COMMUNITY RESOURCE COORDINATOR, TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, TOK, AK

Mr. MOORE. Thank you. I have prepared a written statement, which I will read from.

Senator MURKOWSKI. You can summarize it, too.

Mr. MOORE. Okay. I would like to first thank Senator Murkowski for inviting me to testify at this hearing in regard to the Alaska Native Languages Bill, which he submitted to Congress in July of this year. My name is Gary Moore, and I am here to represent the Tok Native Association and myself at this hearing.

I also am an employee of the Tanana Chiefs Conference out of the subregional Tok office. I am a direct descendant from the Athabascan village of Tanacross, which is located in the upper Tanana Area of interior Alaska. The current usage of the Athabascan language in my immediate family has declined at a rapid pace.

My grandmother, who is still living, is somewhat fluent in English and is fluent in her traditional language. However, she prefers to speak in her Native language when possible. My mother speaks English and can understand her Native language, but does not speak it any longer. I, on the other hand, speak exclusively in English and only know a few words of the Athabascan language. My son knows and speaks only English.

As you can tell, in a period of only four generations, traditional language in my family has all but disappeared. This is why I am personally concerned and involved with this issue. All of Alaska's indigenous Native language are endangered or nearing extinction. If this were not true, we would not have gathered here today to discuss the importance of this issue. Our villages have stated their concern in reference to this problem through resolutions which they submitted to many organizations in hopes that the current trend of their dying cultures and languages will be reversed.

Our State's educational institutions are obviously in the most appropriate position to assist us with this task. However, we are told that there is no funding available, or limited funding at best. I would probably accept this reasoning as fact if it were not for the attention and funding that these same institutions dedicate to many languages other than English. Alaska's secondary and higher education facilities currently offer courses in Spanish, French, German, Russian, Japanese, et cetera. Yet we are told there is no funding for our languages. The underlying reason is not a question of funding, rather a question of priorities.

Some may ask why are these languages dying. They had survived for thousands of years and were therefore very well established. If we can look back in time to when Alaska first became a territory of the United States, which is just over 100 years ago, we would be able to actually see the initial drastic changes that would alter the lives of our people forever.

It was an accepted policy of the Federal Government during that period of time to invade and extinguish our inherited cultures in the name of good in order to conform our people to the so-called civilized society of the United States. Thereafter, Alaska's first public schools to educate the Native people strongly discouraged and often punished the children when they spoke in their traditional language. As a result, the erasing of Alaska's ancient cultures and languages had begun.

These are the reasons why I feel the state and Federal Government have an obligation to assist us with resolving this dilemma. If it was our own action that caused this to occur, we would hold no one accountable other than ourselves. Within the entire upper Tanana area of interior Alaska, there does not exist any institution, facility or organization or program that is solely or even remotely intended to preserve or revive the Athabascan cultures or languages.

Our people do have the interest and desire at heart to resurrect the traditional languages. However, we cannot leave the entire responsibility to be learned from the home or village. As with the English language and other related educational curriculum, our children are required to complete a minimum of 12 years of primary and secondary education in order to get the basic tools to survive in today's society. If we left that responsibility of learning English to only the parents in one's home, it would surely suffer.

In recent years, there have been a few individuals with very limited resources that have begun the task of documenting the Koyukon and Ahtna languages within the Athabascan language family. However, as significant as this may be, it is not enough to assure that even these languages will survive.

I did not come here today to speak only of the problems with our educational system with regard to inaction on American or Alaska Native languages. I also brought recommendations, of which I believe will greatly assist in halting the demise of these languages. They are as follows:

No. 1, we should compile and document commonly used words or phrases for each Alaska Native language and have these recorded on audio or video cassettes for use by beginning students.

No. 2, we should mandate that primary, secondary and higher education institutions develop and incorporate curriculums in Native languages that are traditionally spoken in their area.

No. 3, instruct higher institutions to develop two and four year college degrees for at least one language from the Eskimo, Indian and Aleut language families.

No. 4, until such time as the State develops college degrees in various Native languages, the Federal Government should require that the State of Alaska Department of Education recognize students who achieve certificates or degrees from the Yukon Native Language Center in Canada as professionals for teaching in Alaska.

No. 5, the Federal Government should mandate in law that all languages indigenous to Alaska be recognized and incorporated above all elective foreign languages that are offered in Alaska's schools.

These are just a few of the suggestions that I or other individuals have come up with in discussing this subject. This issue has also got the attention of one of our state representatives, she just spoke, Representative Georgianna Lincoln, who has proposed a bill in the state legislature which if passed would require rural education attendance areas to incorporate the Native language traditionally spoken in the region as part of the school's curriculum.

However, more needs to be done. We are operating on a timeline. If we wait too long, we will lose many of our elders who are the most valuable resource for the languages in all areas of the old culture and traditional ways.

In closing, I will say I appreciate the work Senator Murkowski and his staff have put into proposing the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act in Congress this year. It is a step in the right direction for a wrong that was done long ago. Let's just not wait too long, though, or it may be too late.

Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Gary. Would you identify the language of your heritage? Is it Tanana?

Mr. MOORE. It's the Tanacross language, within the Athabascan language family.

Senator MURKOWSKI. So it would be Tanacross that you are particularly interested in.

Mr. MOORE. Yes.

Senator MURKOWSKI. They tell me there are only 100 people left. Dr. Krauss will get into that.

Let's move on to Dr. Michael Krauss, Director of the Alaska Native Language Center, who has shown not only enthusiasm, but an extraordinary commitment to this very worthwhile effort. We look forward to your recommendations on how to proceed with the process. We certainly look not only to you for guidance, but your suggestions on implementation, on funding, on how the State and Federal Government can work together in a grant system that would direct a curriculum that could be coordinated for both those in the bush and in the urban areas, and at what levels it is realistic to introduce this capability, and how it is best communicated and to what extent can we use the elders in the process.

That's a pretty big order, but those are all questions that I certainly don't pretend to have the answers to. You have made a lifetime study of it and are much more versed on the realities of it, and what can and can't and should and shouldn't be done.

So I look forward very much to your testimony, Dr. Krauss, and I want to thank you for your cooperation in helping us identify the status of Alaska's Native languages. It has been very stimulating to have that information. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL KRAUSS, DIRECTOR, ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE CENTER

Mr. KRAUSS. Thank you, Senator Murkowski and fellow Alaskans. I have prepared a written statement which I will partly read from and partly digress from, as much has already come up from this panel, just these three people already, that I also of course agree with, and who have said some things that need to be said very much.

I speak out here of course to urge support for your bill, S. 1595, to provide for the future of the very essence of Alaska's cultural heritage. And I speak here not just as an academic, but even more importantly as a fellow Alaskan citizen who passionately believes that the loss of any one of these languages is a loss, of course, to Alaska Natives, but it is also a loss to all of us, to all Alaskans.

Our languages, therefore, represent our intellectual wealth, our very store of ideas. Each language has its own, irreplaceable and unique. Lovingly cultivated and handed down by our ancestors, it is the tie that binds our minds to theirs and our minds and our people to each other. If we lose these, we lose our past, and if we lost our past, what will be our future?

I personally have been a student of Alaska Native languages for 30 years at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and have been director of the Alaska Native Language Center there since its establishment in 1972, the same year that bilingual education became legal, finally, in Alaska.

Also, I speak with another kind of hat, as an academic activist. I am also currently chair, as of this last month, of the newly formed committee of the Linguistic Society of America, the committee on Endangered Languages. Also, I am the current president of the SSILA, the society of linguists who study Native American languages nationally. I pledge my representation of those organizations for support of your bill as well.

For 30 years now, not only as an academic, but as a fellow citizen, I have protested the neglect and suppression of Alaska's Native languages in the schools, which has brought them to the crisis that everyone now can see. Instead of teaching English as a second language only to supplement Alaska Native languages, not to replace them, the tragic result we are now faced with is the impending very extinction of Alaska's Native languages.

I have long warned that as parents speak English instead of the Native language to their children, the language will die with them. By now, only Central Yupik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik are still spoken by children. Eighteen of Alaska's 20 Native languages will die during the coming century that is nearly upon us, at the rate things are going.

In some cases, for example, of the Tanana Athabaskan language at Minto and Nenana, the youngest speakers are about my age. So how long, then, before that language becomes extinct; 25 years? The year 2015, give or take 10 years? Those predictions, dire though they may be, and I even apologize for spending maybe 10 years before coming public with this, it was obvious even then that if the youngest speaker of a given language is 10, then in 80 years or 70 years from now, that language will be extinct.

On that basis, very simple arithmetic, tragically simple, the impending dates of extinction, at the rate things are going, were published in the paper on which the statistics you included in your newsletter are based, but as you point out, those statistics were compiled 10 years ago. Though the date of extinction of a given language, the projected extinction, remains the same, the number of speakers inexorably and predictably has become less.

So I would guess in the case of Tanacross, for example, that the number is not 100 any more. And on this map which I suppose is quite familiar to many Alaskans by now, ever since its first edition in 1974, and its second edition in 1982, I have two kinds of symbols for each Alaska Native community: The open, empty dot is for where the language is no longer spoken by children, and the filled-in dark black dot where the children still speak the language. So it is obvious at a glance from this map where the language is still viable in that sense and where it is not; in the case of the village of Rampart, for example, as Representative Lincoln just pointed out to me, there is only one speaker of the local Native Koyukon language left, so we shall soon need a third kind of symbol, for a village when the Native language is extinct

Senator MURKOWSKI. Have we lost any languages that you have been able to identify?

Mr. KRAUSS. We have not yet lost a single Alaska Native language that has been known to us. Even Eyak is among those which are still alive. There have been, of course, prehistorically, I'm sure, many Alaska Native languages that have become extinct in the course of prehistory. But during historic times, so far, not even Eyak is extinct.

Senator MURKOWSKI. As you go along, can you identify how many of those are written vis-a-vis spoken?

Mr. KRAUSS. I can answer that question immediately. All Alaska Native languages can be written and have been written with excellent writing systems, a lot better than English, for example, a lot easier to learn to spell.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And it's not too late to still teach them as a written language?

Mr. KRAUSS. Absolutely not. Definitely not. That we know we can do. But as Representative Lincoln points out to me, in her hometown of Rampart, we may very soon need a third kind of symbol, namely not just that no children speak the language, but nobody speaks the language, a square or triangle or something, as opposed to what we have here.

We have not yet, reached the point when in a single community where the language is entirely extinct. But as Representative Lincoln points out, in Rampart now, there is only one speaker of the language. How old is that speaker?

Ms. **LINCOLN**. That speaker is 73 years old.

Mr. **KRAUSS**. The worst thing about this tragedy is that it was totally unnecessary. Alaska Native languages could have been supplemented instead of replaced by English. In the case of Central Yup'ik and St. Lawrence Island, we still have that choice. This is a topic which should definitely not be neglected, either, not just the necessity for the revitalization of the languages which are no longer spoken by children, but also the support and continuation of those languages still spoken by children. We have cross currents here, people often do not realize what they are about to lose until they start to lose it, until they can see they are losing it. By then it's too late.

In the case of the rest of the languages, this tragedy may still be unnecessary, or at least partly avoidable. One thing we know we can and must do is document these languages to make us as full as possible a record of them, on tape, and with good dictionaries, grammars and collections of the traditional oral literature and history of the people preserved for all time.

This is essential and, with adequate support, feasible. It is the one thing we know definitely we can do, to answer your question. And not only can we do it now, we are at a juncture in history where we also have a technology which far surpasses even what used to be there in writing.

When my ancestors, for example, scratched on parchment what God said to Moses, and preserved that for all time, imagine instead that somebody had been standing next to the Burning Bush with a camcorder, or the Red Sea, that we now have. There is no excuse, therefore, in not preserving an excellent record of what we still have today, with the technology we have today. In that respect we are very, very lucky.

Some of us may complain about the juncture of history we are now living in, but 50 years from now we would be cursed for our stupidity if we did not realize what an important role we are going to play in the future of all our heritage.

The Alaska Native Language Center pledges its continued support and leadership in this field. Except for teaching a few languages on campus, especially Central Yupik and Inupiaq, in education and school programs, we at the Alaska Native Language Center can only help with the development and publication of some of the materials needed, and with some of the training of speakers of these languages to teach the languages in the villages. The basic prototypical work for example, the development of writing systems for all languages, has been for Alaska I think pretty well discharged by now.

So to answer the question once more, we can definitely do this technical kind of work. That is our stock-in-trade, our forte, what we are I think genuinely experts in. Now we get into an area now, though, where we are not experts and in which no one is an expert and which this bill addresses. That is the revival of the languages out in the communities, what we at the University of Alaska or any academic can do is not to provide the will of the people, but to give them the wherewithal to revive their languages as spoken languages.

That has to be done by the people themselves. The very best teacher of a language is not some Ph.D. in linguistics somewhere at some university, obviously, or maybe not so obviously to some people.

But obviously, the best teacher of a language is a Native speaker of a language who learned that language on his mother's knee, and has therefore the innate capability and superb expertise to do that very same thing, teach the language to his child in the traditional way that has worked for thousands of years.

We hope that can continue in Alaska in a modified way, with the help of the university system, the school system, and above all, the Native communities with the kind of support that they would get from your bill, from Representative Lincoln's bill, and the expertise still needed, not yet there, on exactly how to implement all this, and how, for example, to coordinate the Alaska state legislative support and Federal support for this effort that so deeply concerns us all here.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Krauss appears in appendix.]

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much. I very much appreciate your commitment and interest and willingness to formulate the process. I think it is evident the enthusiasm is there. The resource is still out there, fortunately, and the question is how to capture it and formulate a workable procedure so that a grant with the assistance from the State can address the problem.

One thing we should pinpoint is, should the initial effort be on the very young, to start out and formulate a capability in the rural regions where they can come together in the school system and have opportunity to learn their language. Then the question is, can you expect an elder that is not trained as a teacher to do this, or is it your view that it should be utilized from a central communication capability at a university where we would come out as a satellite? Or does one supplement another? Can you give us a 30-second answer to that?

Mr. **Krauss**. Well, that's more than one question to me.

Senator **Murkowski**. That's right.

Mr. **Krauss**. I can only say that we pledge our help. We can obviously not supply the manpower, the money. All we can supply is some of the expertise needed at the University, most directly, and indirectly, of course, through people we have trained and by now the third or fourth generation of people that have been trained by people who have been trained by us.

But to answer your question, for example, on the efficacy of teaching by any means, a language as a second language through schools and any kind of satellite technology, I think is already familiar experience to us, that at best this produces a kind of expertise which can be continued on through the generations as a kind of academic, specialized expertise that everybody will have some capability in, and only a few specialists within the culture would be able to continue as specialists, after the last generation of Native speakers dies, for example, to become the second language teachers throughout all time.

The possibility of language revival, as I happen to know from the case of Ireland and Israel, in the case of Irish Gaelic and Hebrew, is very interesting. I think we can learn a lot from it. I want to point out that we here in Alaska are not alone, that throughout the north of the world, in general, about 90 percent, just as in the case of Alaska, of the world's northern languages, most of them in the U.S.S.R., are in the same sorry crisis.

Worldwide, there are about 6,000 languages, and maybe 3,000 of the world's 6,000 languages are no longer spoken by children. It could be as much as that already. We are approaching an unspeakable crisis that most people are unaware of.

We are aware of it in the biological world, but we are not as aware of it in the cultural world, that the world is about to lose half of its languages, being already doomed to extinction in the coming century, and another 40 percent or so that is 90 percent of the world's 6,000 languages will either die or be doomed in the coming century.

So we are not alone, and our Alaskan experience is not unique. I think we desperately need to get our answers not only from ourselves, but from being part of the rest of the north and the rest of the world.

Senator MURKOWSKI. All right. Let me thank you very much, Dr. Krauss. I would ask you to leave your written copies of your statements, if you have them, and Jenny will pick them up.

I would also appreciate, since we are going to have the record open for 2 weeks, at least, let's just figure 3 weeks, if you would take, let's take this case of Representative Lincoln, where there are 49 villages in the area that traditionally addresses the Koyukon language, if you were just to take that area and those villages and address a workable program between Federal and State assistance, with the expertise of the University of Alaska and their academic knowledge and commitment of how to communicate with the talent that is in the rural area as well as those that live in an urban setting.

I could see the aspects of a language center or cultural center in Fairbanks to address the opportunities for the ability of those who live in that kind of an urban setting. But to get out to those 49 villages, why don't you just propose a methodology of what you could expect the local villages to contribute in the way of expertise, somebody who could come in.

Then, do we have a problem within the school system and the state department of education to allow non-professionals to come into the system? What kind of remuneration or payment are they going to have to have? Is it conceivable that, Dr. Krauss, your language center could through the satellite capability focus in and complement this? Because don't expect the expertise of Washington to figure out the mechanics of how this thing is going to work.

If it is going to work, it is not going to work because of Washington. It is going to work because of the commitment and dedication of the people involved. But if you can help design it, we can help push it and try and help fund it, and try and help make a model.

The best way to get grants is to propose this as a model grant. That's the kind of technique we would like to try and use.

But somebody is going to have to sit down and say "Here is how we feel, based on our professional ability, it can work," and since you are starting out with one area, if you could apply it to the 49 villages, as Representative Lincoln has suggested, and kind of build a little narrative, here's how you would see it work, why then, we ought to be able to use the same model, get input from other areas as to how they would see it work in their 10 villages, if it's out of Bethel, or whatever.

Ms. LINCOLN. Senator, just to correct, and I didn't want to leave the thought that the 49 villages are Koyukon speaking villages. There are nine distinct Native languages within those 49 villages.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Nine distinct ones.

Ms. LINCOLN. Yes; nine distinct languages.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, that makes it a little more complicated.

Ms. LINCOLN. Yes; it does, but some of the very questions that you are asking, my office will be happy to supply some of the recommendations. And just one last thing, I am sitting here listening to this, thinking that next year, I believe it is, we are celebrating, or the United States of America is celebrating, the 500th year that Columbus landed. We are sitting here talking about our languages that are dying, when this language here in Alaska was born from Alaska, the heart of Alaska, this language we are talking about did not come from another country. Our language is birthed from this land here.

Senator MURKOWSKI. That's right. That's a very important distinction.

I want to thank the witnesses. I think you have really highlighted many of the issues before us, and Representative Lincoln, Dr. Krauss, James Nageak and Gary Moore, we very much appreciate your contribution this morning. In the interest of time, I am going to move on. You had something to say, Gary.

Mr. MOORE. Real briefly, regarding the last question you addressed to Dr. Krauss. I think that's true what you said about organizing, what's the plan of action we are going to take to revive these languages. That does need to be done, it does need to be addressed. In some of my comments I tried to throw some ideas in there about what needs to be done.

But a set order of how we are going to proceed does need to be done. One other thing I want to mention is, in regard to are these Native instructors going to be recognized as professionals if they have not gotten college degrees, we have gone through this situation in my area.

There is a lady from a village in Northway, her name is Eva Sams, she is an elder there. She is fluent in her language and in English. She had gone in and taught in her local school, in the village. She was paid approximately $6 to $8 an hour. She was dedicated to teach the children of the school how to speak the language, but at $6 to $8 an hour could not afford to make a living off that wage.

So in turn, she went to the Yukon Native Language Center out of Whitehorse that teaches Athabascan speakers to be instructors.

She achieved her certificate, returned to the village, and still is not recognized as a professional, because the State of Alaska does not recognize it. That is one thing I would like to see changed.

The other is this bill is very commendable. It is a great effort on your part and we do appreciate it. But as a grant, it is not enough. We need to mandate in law that these Native languages of Alaska that have always been here and are now in danger of extinction need to be required to be in the curriculums. Otherwise, they will not be done, because if they were going to be done, they would have been done already. That's the last comment I wanted to make.

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. Thank you very much. I appreciate that comment. It's right on target. Thank you, and we wish you a good day, and appreciate very much your active commitment to this worthwhile effort.

I am going to call the next panel, but before I do, let me recognize Joaqulin Estus of Alaska Public Radio Network, that is covering this as well. You have already met Mel Jones. We have George Lukin over here on one camera, and Elaine Loomis taping for the Kodiak Area Native Association, and George is taping for the general public, whatever that might be.

Let's go with the second panel. We have John Active, KYUK radio and television, Bethel; Nina Olsen, Kodiak Area Native Association, with Philamena Knecht, Kodiak Area Native Association; Ruth Sampson, Bilingual Coordinator, Northwest Arctic Borough School District, of Kotzebue; and Daisy May Lamont of Bethel would like to come up as well. She has promised to be brief, as I am going to have to ask all of you to be. It is much more helpful if you generalize your statement rather than read it, because it comes from the heart then.

We have a little problem with unspoken thoughts in Washington, but I would encourage you to proceed as you feel most comfortable. If you want to summarize it in your own words, it comes across a lot stronger.

Again, we are going to try to move along. I am going to limit you to 10 minutes at a maximum. I thank you for being here, and I don't know who is first, but let's take them out of order. Who wants to volunteer? We have had one put up her hand and the other two point toward her. Would you please identify yourself?

STATEMENT OF DAISY MAY LAMONT, BETHEL REGION, AK

Ms. **LAMONT**. Thank you, Senator Murkowski. My name is Daisy May Lamont. I am from the Bethel Region. I work for the Lower Kuskokwim School District, and I am on the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation Board and the recent elected association village council president housing commissioner.

[Remarks in native language.]

Senator Murkowski, it was necessary for me to speak with my primary language. Speaking in my primary language somewhat slows down my heart and gives me more power to say it in English.

I am very happy to see the bill that you have initiated. It has been one of my long dreams to see this become a reality. I am a product of a village student as well as one of the students that was taken away from a village to go to Chenawa Indian School. Before leaving, my primary language was Yup'ik. When I left my village, I went through the cultural shock phase where English was a foreign language to me, speaking in my Native language and prior to departing reading and writing in my own language.

Certainly, yes, in the past, in the history, our elders pushed and supported for English to be taught. Middle age—I am not middle age but I am a product of 30 years old as to seeing how important it is to have more than one language.

Now, with the youth, some youth have lost the language. However, I am one who is optimistic to see that this can be regained. Presently, there are many Federal Government funding appropriations which within the qualification credential areas, it is mandated that an individual be bilingual and cross cultural orientated. So this, in my view, gives a great strength to this bill. It will enhance and help our youth as well as our elders to work hand in hand, teaching our Native languages.

Presently, it has been voiced for quite some time, basically by the elders, that the teachers that arrive within our village setting, that it be mandated that they take courses in terms of our Native language. Therefore, this bill also not only helps us as Alaskan Natives, it also helps any other ethnic group.

I have found within my leadership part of the success that I have had is that to know both of the languages, to speak Yup'ik and to speak English and to read and write. Therefore, within the bill itself, I feel it is also important that not only speaking the language, it should also include reading and writing. Because reading and writing gives that hands-on, instant learning process for a child.

I will say on behalf of the elders, being one who highly respects our elders, within our Yup'ik standard, I am in a position and take the pride to say that the greatest teachers within the State of Alaska in my view to teach reading and writing of our Native language is our elders. I cannot be in a position to put them in a lower standard, in a Yup'ik standard they are up on top.

So what I am addressing here is two systems. Whose standards are we going to implement? I would strongly recommend that receiving input from the villages and receiving input from the elders and the youth, this bill will be successful. Without that input, it will fail.

Where is Senator Murkowski?

Ms. LINKOUS. I'm sorry, he had to excuse himself for 1 moment. He will be back.

Ms. LAMONT. I was hoping he would ask me questions.

However, I am highly stressing the fact that it has always been my dream to see that our Native language be returned to where it respectfully remains. Not only with that in mind, there are two crucial issues that are before us as Alaska Natives. I feel that it works hand-in-hand, that is subsistence, and that is our Native language.

Thank you.

Ms. LINKOUS. Thank you.

Ms. LAMONT. Mr. Murkowski, you hardly heard my testimony, so I am assuming you would not have any questions.

Senator **Murkowski**. You might be surprised. Thank you very much. The next witness is John Active. I assume you are going to leave your testimony with us. Please proceed, John.

STATEMENT OF JOHN ACTIVE, KYUK RADIO AND TELEVISION, BETHEL, AK

Mr. **Active**. Honorable Senator Murkowski, and members of the Senate committee. I was so happy when I learned about the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act. I just had to be a participant in this historic event. I am so very proud that I am a Yup'ik and it has been recognized as one of two languages which continues to be spoken by Alaska Native children. The other is Siberian Yup'ik. We are so very proud.

I am not only part of the children who can speak, also of my elders who persisted in speaking, although when they were attending school, they were often punished for speaking their language, Yup'ik. Their punishment was unthinkable, washing their mouth out with soap, or slapping their hand with a ruler. This is a traditional punishment among your people, but it must have been a most heartbreaking experience for my people.

We as a group of Alaska Natives are very lucky that we have not acquired a taste for soap or evolved into a people with ruler markings on our palm. My people suffered much, and although they can speak Yup'ik today, many of their words are no longer used. We don't know what they mean, that is the younger generation. It makes me sad when I hear words I don't understand, and it makes my elders angry when I don't understand what they are trying to say to me.

I was raised by my grandmother, and she told me bedtime stories in the Yup'ik language, along with their corresponding songs. I went to school and learned English, but when I returned home, Yup'ik was always spoken. I learned to speak, pray and sing in Yup'ik, and today I can translate into Yup'ik while simultaneously reading silently in English. Many others can, and we are proud to be able to do this.

Today, Yup'ik is being taught in our area elementary and secondary schools, including the community college in my town, by some of the very same people who had their palms slapped and their mouths washed out with soap. It is people like these who turn out to be the most proficient educators in the field of teaching the Yup'ik language, because their own teachers tried so hard to keep them from speaking it.

Today on the Yukon Kuskokwim deltas, you will find church services being conducted in the Yup'ik language. Hymns and the New Testament have been translated into the Yup'ik, and the Old Testament is being translated into my language as we meet here today.

I work for the public radio station and television station, KYUK, in Bethel, AK. I work in the Yup'ik news department. I love what I do for my people. KYUK radio and television has been on the air for 20 years. Our station is on the air for 18 hours a day and approximately 3 hours of the Yup'ik language goes over the air waves.

My language is alive because of KYUK's dedication to serving the needs of its listeners and viewers. I might add that the station serves some 56 villages in our area.

Currently, our station offers two newscasts in the Yup'ik language, one-half hour at noon at 15 minutes at 6:30 p.m. My dream is to produce 20 minutes of news at noon with a feature Yup'ik classroom for radio, teaching the Yup'ik language to both speakers and non-speakers. Likewise for the evening newscast.

However, this dream is only a dream, as we are currently in a budget-cutting mode. Perhaps you might be able to help my people and their language in this regard.

As I said earlier, we younger Yup'iks don't always understand what our elders are trying to say to us, and like other Alaska Natives, we are in danger of losing the language. But through the aforementioned dream I shared with you, all Natives and non-Natives alike would learn and teach and help the languages survive. This is a proposal I have, not only for my people, but for all Native groups in Alaska, including the Native groups in the lower 48 States.

In the final analysis, all Native Americans may be proud in one way or another, but we would be vastly rich in the knowledge of our Native speaking abilities.

I leave you a copy of this short statement I have, including a copy of a supplement of the "KYUK 20 Years on the Air Serving You." There are some copies in the back for anyone who needs one. It explains the station's work on the Yup'ik language offerings we provide to our people.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Active appears in appendix.]

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. Thank you, John.

The next witness is Nina Olsen, Kodiak Area Native Association. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF NINA OLSEN, KODIAK AREA NATIVE ASSOCIATION

Ms. **OLSEN**. Senator Murkowski, you said something about sharing with you a summary of our writing. Usually I do that, but for this I had spent time writing, so I am going to read it.

My name is Nina Olsen. I was born in the Village of Afoqnak, a northern island of Kodiak. As a child, I spent a lot of time with my grandfather, Alexander Knagin, who spoke only the Alutiiq language. I learned the language and was able to communicate with him.

My parents, Afonie and Christina Lukin, spoke the Native language with each other all the time. When they spoke to us, my six brothers and sisters, it was all in English.

My husband, Pete Olsen, and I had a rude awakening a few years back in this, that we had lost our culture and the Alutiiq with it. I was hired to go to work at KANA, Kodiak Area Native Association, 4 years ago as a CHR. With this title I am allowed to work on the Alutiiq part of the time.

I am in the alcoholic department. I work with Native clients, one to one and in groups. When my clients get into recovery, many of them wish they could speak the language. I believe learning the language builds self esteem and helps them know who they are.

I have had classes using the Alutiiq dictionary. I feel that if the people learn the alphabets, and learn to read the language, it would not be hard to learn to speak it, especially if they have been exposed to it.

I have also had a group of ladies get together and learn Alutiiq songs. I have translated a few, and have helped the Alutiiq dancers with some songs and hope to do more.

I think it is still a good idea to have it taught in the schools. I know the schools can't do it alone, but it would help.

Philamena Knecht, who is a linguist, and I, are putting a curriculum together in hopes that it will be in our schools some day. We are also putting Alutiiq language lessons on video so our village schools can use them.

I am willing to do whatever I can to pass on our Alutiiq language. Since our language has been quenched for so long, it will take a long time to recapture it.

[Remarks in native language.]

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. Thank you very much, Nina Olsen.

The next witness is Ruth Sampson, the bilingual coordinator for the Northwest Arctic Borough School District in Kotzebue. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF RUTH SAMPSON, BILINGUAL COORDINATOR, NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, KOTZEBUE, AK

Ms. **SAMPSON**. Thank you, Senator, and I wish to thank your staff for all the help they have given me in the last few days, gathering information that I needed.

My name is Ruth Sampson. I am presently residing in Kotzebue, AK. I am testifying as an Inupiaq Eskimo speaker, and also on behalf of the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District.

I am also happy about S. 1595. I will have to admit that I was surprised but delighted when I started reading it. I support the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991 for the following five reasons.

It would greatly enhance and complement the activities we are presently doing. For example, it would greatly support the Northwest Arctic Borough School District to implement its Inupiaq language and heritage policy, which states that

> It shall be the policy of the District to encourage in its staff and students a thorough understanding of the language and way of life of the Inupiaq people. Toward this end, Inupiaq language and heritage studies shall be incorporated throughout the curriculum of the schools. Inupiaq language arts shall be offered in both elementary and secondary schools. The history and culture of the Inupiaq people shall be incorporated within the subjects of the curriculum, but not limited to social studies, health, science, vocations, arts, music, and physical education.

It is known that parent and community support is necessary for Native language programs in the schools to succeed. This act would allow the parents and the communities to support the Native language programs in the school. An argument could be made that financial assistance is not necessary for the support to be there.

But in Northwestern Alaska, it is necessary, because we are still battling the effects of the acts of suppression and intended extermination of the Inupiaq language that occurred there during the first half of this century. Having access to a structured program with financial assistance as outlined in this act would allow the villages to rightfully and systematically regain their pride in transmitting the language.

You may have also heard about the Inupiaq Ilitqusiat Spirit program in the Nana region. Its goals are to teach Inupiaq values, to develop individual identify and self esteem, to develop incentive and motivation, to develop use of Inupiaq language, to preserve Inupiaq cultural heritage, and to teach traditional job skills.

The principle of this program is that the Inupiaq language is the medium through which cultural identity will be transmitted and that Inupiaq is the language that traditional values and skills will be taught in.

Although the goals and principles of this program are used to help guide and direct regional institutional policies, funding as proposed by this act would help the program to achieve its goals.

This act would compensate for programs that the Bilingual Educational Act, Public Law 100-297, cannot fund. The Bilingual Educational Act does recognize that the instructional use and development of a child's non-English Native language does promote self esteem, subject matter achievement, and English language acquisition. However, the purpose of bilingual programs in both the Federal and State level is to establish, operate, or improve programs for limited English speaking students. In other words, the ultimate goal of the Bilingual Educational Act is for students to become competent in English.

Although this is the goal, the populations where the Alaska Native language is still spoken have endeavored to develop Alaska Native language programs in the school. This is acceptable under the Bilingual Education Act, but there is a catch 22 situation involved. It is not comforting to know that whenever Alaska Native children become proficient in English, meaning they become non-LEP, they will no longer be eligible for funding under the Bilingual Education Act.

Ideally, it would be preferable for schools whose student population is comprised of a high percentage of Alaska Native children to be eligible for funding as described in this act. However, if they are not, the act as stated would enable Alaska Native villages or corporations to apply for grants to enhance, encourage, preserve and facilitate the ability of Alaska Natives to speak their Native languages. This would allow the communities to establish Alaska Native programs that conform to their specifications.

While it is true that the schools have endeavored to establish the programs, there still exists a dire need for the establishment of training programs. For example, the Alaska Tech Center wants to establish a training center there, but they are under the School District. So I don't know how they would have to apply for funds under this program unless a village does it through the Alaska Technical Center.

Presently, they are working on a pilot program in Russian. We also have two sites in our school district where there is a satellite program to teach Japanese and Russian as was discussed earlier. There is a need for the drafting and printing of materials to be used for the teaching of the Native languages. But in the bill, I would like to see a section where computer-assisted multimedia interactive programs can be developed because most of the schools, or even the villages, have access to computers.

As a bilingual coordinator, I get requests, at least maybe five a month, for self-taught Inupiaq language courses. We don't have that. So there is a dire need for that. My latest request came from a young man who was in jail. It really made me sad that he had to go all the way to the state jail to decide he wanted to learn the language.

There is an urgent need for the continued compilation of oral testimony to record or preserve Alaska Native languages. We have a collection of about 400 audio cassette tapes of our elders in our region, and we have tried to translate as much as we could, but that translation takes a long time.

We have tried to produce materials. Whenever we produce some books, the schools just snatch them up. There is a hunger and need from the youth and the people to understand what their own culture and history is about. Even though we have elders come in and speak, they are dying every day. That need is very urgent.

I am supportive of this act because it would support the Native American Languages Act that was signed into law by President Bush on October 30, 1990. It is for these reasons that I support this act, and I thank you for this opportunity.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Ruth.

Let me compliment the panel. I have a few questions. Daisy May, you indicated that you felt there was a tremendous concern to maintain the reading and writing skills associated with your language, which I believe is Central Yup'ik, is that correct?

Ms. LAMONT. Yes.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Can you give us a little background, based on your own professional experience, of the degree of written material that is available? For example, are there children's books, in any number? We all started out, at least I did in Ketchikan, with Bob and Jane and went from there. What is available in supplemental written material, or would this have to be created as well?

Ms. LAMONT. At this present time, within the Lower Kuskokwim School District, since I work for the Bilingual Department, we have presently in place a lot of written textbooks in our Yup'ik language, starting from kindergarten through 12th grade. I encourage any other school district that may speak a language similar to ours, that they are welcome to contact us.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Has this been created by the individual people like yourself, that would write a children's primary reader, or where is it coming from? Does it come from professional, academic types? Where was this created?

Ms. LAMONT. With my recollection, where this has been created is utilizing our elders from the villages, receiving input from them, developing the materials.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Who underwrote the costs of printing, putting it into book form?

Ms. **Lamont**. Our Bilingual Department of the Kuskokwim School District.

Senator **Murkowski**. Could you provide for the record an index of what is written that would be supplemental to advanced teaching so that we can address just what kinds of written resources are available. I assume it is different with each individual language, and if we went down to Prince William Sound, we would find nothing, or very little. But you have had that resource, and it is part of, obviously, the consideration of what kinds of steps you are going to have to take. It is one thing to have somebody teach the language, and then it's something else to provide supplemental reading materials in the language.

Ms. **Lamont**. Yes, Senator, Pardon me for not having the material with me. It was supposed to be faxed to me, and somewhere the materials either froze or burned between Bethel and Anchorage.

However, what I can do is we can mail you the document or fax you the necessary document, and I will see that you receive it. I would like to elaborate a few seconds in terms of who we have also utilized. We have also utilized local expertise, local Yup'ik individuals that speak, read and write within the Bethel area.

Senator **Murkowski**. I think the commitment of you and others to preserve elders stories, by taping them, and maintaining that tape library, is a very, very substantial step forward. I am just concerned about the written number of books and so forth to supplement that effort.

I would certainly commend and encourage that effort, because that leads to, I think, a broader effort by either establishing cultural centers or the curriculum process of our school system, to have supplemental readers that can be used to expand literacy and language capabilities. If you have already got a substantial amount of that, that's very gratifying.

I assume, as you addressed the interests of the elders and youth in the program, you are aware of my concern that we don't just drift off into a bureaucracy. Somebody has to take a model area and say "This is how it would work as I see it."

You have to address the reality that there is a legitimate question of what kinds of background you have to have to teach, and do you become tenured, all kinds of things that are of concern. But I think the bottom line is to get something up and working before the languages are lost.

Let me just move on very briefly with a couple of other questions and observations. Nina Olsen, you mentioned that you have a dictionary that is written and is in print?

Ms. **Olsen**. Yes; it is. It was done—gosh, maybe 15 years ago. I believe there is another one that is in the making.

Senator **Murkowski**. Would that be in addition, more words?

Ms. **Olsen**. I believe so.

Senator **Murkowski**. That again is very fundamental to a written and spoken language, yet is often overlooked. I guess the question is, who printed it, and who maintains it?

Ms. **Olsen**. This was through the University of Alaska. Jeff Lear is the one that got this together with the elders around Kodiak.

Senator **Murkowski**. John, you mentioned the ability—I am talking to John Active now. John is preoccupied but that's all right.

John, you say you can simultaneously translate from English into Yup'ik and back, which is an art that probably very few people have. And you are able to do it, because you practice it all the time, I assume.

So it's not difficult. But is it not probably correct that if you did not have the commitment to communicate to your people in their Native language, it would take a lot of practice to get up to the point of expertise that you have?

Mr. ACTIVE. Yes; it would take some practice, a lot of practice. If it's your job, then it comes to you naturally, eventually.

Senator MURKOWSKI. You indicated KYUK in Bethel is a public service station. Your budget obviously has been, as with all public service radio and television, reduced.

Mr. ACTIVE. Yes.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Is there a possibility of private grants, that we could look to to supplement your efforts, recognizing that you are doing things a little differently than a lot of public radio and television stations, you are trying to communicate with your people?

Mr. ACTIVE. Well, I'll tell you that different organizations in our town have received grants from either the Federal Government or the State. Since we try to get the grants and can't seem to get hold of any, we always go to those organizations in our town that receive the grants and then they will say "Okay, we will give you this much, and you can use it for whatever you want." That seems to be the easiest way to get grants nowadays, let the big guys get the big grants, and then go after them, instead of going directly to the source. Because the source—they are too busy doing something else.

Senator MURKOWSKI. In your research, and I gather that the previous witness, Dr. Krauss, indicated that prior to 1972 or something like that, it was illegal, basically. Was that under the limitation of the BIA system, or was that also illegal in the sense of the state of Alaska and previously the territory, or do you know?

Mr. ACTIVE. I think it was the territorial schools that it was illegal under. I don't know too much about the Bureau of Indian Affairs. There are other people that will talk on this, I don't want to go into it.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Okay. Finally, Ruth, I appreciate your support for the concept of what's addressed in the legislation. You should understand that the legislation is just that, it is in a draft form, pending witnesses to make it better and eliminate things that are not needed. So it is not cast in concrete. It is very flexible and that's why your testimony is so important. Again, it isn't going to work if it is designed in Washington, DC, or in my opinion, with all due respect to Representative Lincoln, in Juneau.

It has to be structured by the people and it can't cover everything to start out. It has to be directed to a function where it will do the most good and be the simplest to start. Then it can be improved upon. That's why it is so important that some of you volunteer to write out a model of how it can work. Because I don't know the communication capability of moving it into a classroom via satellite.

But I know we are moving in to some extent some Japanese and some Russian. And I don't want to belittle that, because that's very important to students of all Alaska to be able to be conversant in language that our neighboring countries have, because that gives them a better understanding and a better competitive edge.

But they certainly shouldn't lose the language of their heritage simply because it is overlooked. I think that kind of commitment has to begin at home, and that's with the aboriginal people, and that's you. What we want to do is help, but you have to help us say how it will work. Otherwise, you get a dictate that would be so complicated nobody could follow it.

Thank you very much, panel 2, for being with us—John Active, KYUK in Bethel; Daisy May Lamont from Bethel; Nina Olsen, Kodiak Area Native Association; Ruth Sampson, Bilingual Coordinator, Northwest Arctic Borough School District. And I apologize to Daisy May, I did step out for a few minutes, but I had a 14-hour plane ride last night, and if you haven't had that lately, it gets your attention sometimes.

Panel 3, David Salmon, First Chief of the Denakkanaaga Elders; John Starr, the Second Chief of the Denakkanaaga Elders; Poldine Carlo, Founding Member, Denakkanaaga Elders; and Agatha Nevak, Secretary of the Calista Elders Council.

We have one more panel of other folks that want to be heard that were not on the witness list. What I am going to do is accommodate them in one panel next. And we are going to have the youth delegate join them, that's Tammy Shellikoff.

I am going to allow the youth person a little more time, but I am going to limit those that just came up to about 3 to 4 minutes. I would much rather have your verbal expression than a written word. I just wanted for those of you that might have weak kidneys or other commitments to understand what kind of program we have for the balance.

With that, why don't we ask Ms. Carlo to go first. Is that all right? Okay. Somebody has to start. Poldine Carlo, Founding Member, Denakkanaaga Elders.

STATEMENT OF POLDINE CARLO, FOUNDING MEMBER, DENAKKANAAGA ELDERS

Ms. **Carlo**. My name is Poldine Carlo, originally from Nulato. I was born and raised in Nulato, that's on the Yukon River. But I have been living in Fairbanks about 33 years. I am not a very good speaker, but I will get across to you people what I am trying to say.

Senator **Murkowski**. You are doing fine. I live in Fairbanks, too, but I have only lived there 20 years. But in Alaska, I've been living here 47 years, I guess.

Ms. **Carlo**. Talking about Athabascan language, first of all, the students have to want to learn to speak their Native language. You cannot shove something down their throat that they are not interested in. There are different dialects in our language, and you have to have a real good teacher to teach in each different area that has different dialects.

There are only two villages on the Yukon that have the same dialect, that's Nulato and Katlag. I can speak my language real well, because I was brought up at the time when we used to only speak our language, most of the time, around home.

If the students learn the language in school, after they leave school to go home, are the parents willing to talk to their children in their language? That's another problem there.

I had eight children. I never taught my children how to speak my language, because I didn't grow up learning my language. I grew up with my language. Therefore, I couldn't understand that my children were losing the language when they were growing up.

If my grandmother was living now, how could my kids communicate with her when they couldn't understand the language or speak it? I am going to say that one out of 100, I am the one person that will say here that when I was going to school, I was never slapped, not one time, for speaking my language. I went to a Catholic school.

I went to school to learn how to read, to write, to do math. And we also had one day a week where the sisters would teach us home economics. There was not one time I was ever slapped by the nuns for speaking my language. Because when you go to school, you are not going to school to speak your Native language in school. You are going there to learn the English part of whatever you call it.

As soon as you left the school, you could speak your language, which we did. We never used to call people by their English names. Most all the people in the village had Indian names. So like I said, I will be the one out of 100 people that would say I was never slapped in school. I have a lot of things to be thankful to the nuns for, a lot of things.

I have been married for 51 years and I have eight children. I think if it wasn't for the way I was brought up at the mission, I wouldn't have had the life that I have right now, which is a very, very happy life, even though we all had to work very hard for our living. Living is too easy for people right now. A lot of them don't work for what they are getting. I am getting out of hand here, I think.

Senator MURKOWSKI. No; you're making your point very well.

Ms. CARLO. I travel a lot to different areas. I get invited. I was up to Kotzebue about four different times for their meetings. In the morning, when they open their meeting, they have these Head Start children that would sing in their language, and do their Eskimo dance.

I went to Bethel last year, 1 year ago. They had two teenagers, a boy and a girl, that would translate the Yup'ik into English for us people that didn't understand their language. It's really a sad thing when there is none of the Indian people that could do that.

I think that's all I have to say here. Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Poldine. I think you have referenced back to some of the fundamentals I think we all need to refer to once in a while. Yes?

Ms. CARLO. I forgot one thing. I was going to say to the Indian people that they should take lessons from the Eskimos to see how far they are ahead of us in their language, how do they go about that? It seems like every time we have meetings we talk about this, and still there is nothing done about it. We have to start somewhere. We Indians better get together with the Eskimos and ask them how to go about teaching their young kids how to speak their language.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you, Poldine. If I may ask, what mission school did you go to?

Ms. **Carlo**. Nulato, the Catholic mission school there.

Senator **Murkowski**. When did that close?

Ms. **Carlo**. About 20 years ago.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much.

Let's go to one of the gentlemen. David Salmon.

STATEMENT OF DAVID SALMON, FIRST CHIEF, DENAKKANAAGA ELDERS

Mr. **Salmon**. Thank you, Senator. My name is David Salmon, I was born and raised in Black River. I worked in the community for a long time. I have been a minister in that country, a minister to my people a long time. For the first 17 years I was teaching people in my language. But the last 17 years, I can't teach my people in my language.

I think the problem is that we are losing the languages, it's our own fault. The only place we can learn the languages is at home. That's where we learn the language, from the experts of my language.

What I want to ask you, Senator, is—everything is working under the program, through the program, the bilingual program is worked through that program, it is working in the school. They are writing the words, but they don't understand the language. Because our language behind our language is the sound, it is sound just like a musical sound that the children have to learn before they speak the language.

What I want to ask you is to start another program alongside that bilingual program, that an elder can teach the young people at home, maybe a few hours a day, alongside the bilingual program. I think that would work. That's the only way they can speak.

The bilingual program is just writing, that's just about all. So I think I want—and way back, things were explained. Life was explained, how to move around in the land. These things survived, and are with me today, and I want these three things to be with my generation, my children. I ask you if we can start a new program alongside the bilingual program.

Thank you.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much, David. Let's go to John Starr. John, you're the Second Chief.

STATEMENT OF JOHN STARR, SECOND CHIEF, DENAKKANAAGA ELDERS

Mr. **Starr**. My name is John Starr, I am from Tanana. I had a testimony sheet from the school district, but they were supposed to fax it up here, and that got lost in the wind too, someplace. So I think it will be—

Senator **Murkowski**. The fax got lost in the wind.

Mr. **Starr**. Yes; there must be a big wind somewhere. I called them up yesterday and asked Julie Kitka this morning if we had it.

She said she didn't have it. The Tanana School District, the School Board, I met with them and they are really interested in the bilingual program. It's like they say, it's a really serious problem today, with our young people at home.

Because like Poldine said, we are all Athabascans, and every little section seems like it has different dialects. That's what's going to make it really complicated. But she talks different than I do, and he talks different than I do.

I know we had students here last night that were singing and dancing at the arena. They can sing the songs, but they can't pronounce the words in some of the songs. Like Gary Moore brought up, there are teachers, but they don't recognize them as schoolteachers. Just like me, I have a problem writing, too, because I don't have that much education. But we can speak our language.

Years ago, and when I get back to Fairbanks, there is something I am going to find out, too, in our dialect, in the churches they had hymnbooks. I remember seeing the elders get up there and sing, they would pick up those books and sing in their native tongue. So we are really pleased that you have got this bill going, and Representative Georgianna Lincoln's.

We don't know half the answers, but we have to work together. By communicating with one another, that's the only way we will solve this. I can't give you all the answers, and I don't think anybody else here can give you all the answers by communicating, and then you see how much time we have to get this program going, or to start writing grants for it.

That's the only way we will solve it. Because I don't have the answers and I don't think anybody else does. But by working together, I think we will have it accomplished.

Thank you.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you, John.

Next is Agatha Nevak, Secretary of Calista Elders Council.

STATEMENT OF AGATHA NEVAK, SECRETARY, CALISTA ELDERS COUNCIL

Ms. **Nevak**. My name is Agatha Nevak. I am Secretary for the Calista Elders Council. We have 1,005 elders. In 1990, Calista Elders Council was created as a non-profit organization regulated through state and Federal laws. Calista Elders Council has four missions, all related to enhance the lives of Natives in the Calista region. The Calista Elders Council is operated by a board of directors elected by 1,005 Native elders who are 65 years or older enrolled to Calista Corporation. To explain our position on S. 1595 let me explain our missions.

There are four missions adopted by the elders: To maintain and preserve the cultural, linguistic, and traditional lifestyles of Natives in the Calista Region; to improve the health and welfare of all elders in western Alaska; to encourage the political awareness of Natives in Calista Region; and to pursue, construct and own an intermediate care facility in Bethel, Alaska.

Mission one, to maintain and preserve the cultural, linguistic and traditional lifestyles of Natives in the Calista Region, is the most important of our four missions. The very core of survival of cultures throughout the Yup'ik villages is the Yup'ik language. Yup'ik literal translation means genuine without any mixed blood. Native dancing, traditional stories, celebrations, potlatches, cultural normals and mores and passed on through the Yup'ik language. Many of these traditional stories or lifestyles are rapidly disappearing.

Quoting Dr. Michael E. Krauss, head of the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, in his Alaska Native Language Center Research Papers number 4, 1980, at page 45, he states:

> The Yup'ik language is strongest in the Kuskokwim region, where it is the first language of entire communities. In many communities of the Bristol Bay and Yukon areas, Yup'ik is no longer spoken as a first language by some or any children.

On page 66, Dr. Krauss says:

> The time has come to face the real future of Alaskan languages. There is not more time to waste deluding ourselves about the unpleasant and tragic aspects of this. Alaska Native languages are entering a period of final crisis for their future as living languages. Most of them are about to die.

On page 69, Dr. Krauss states:

> We at the Alaska Native Language Center feel the responsibility for doing what we can to promote the survival of Alaska Native languages as living spoken languages. For this reason I am describing quite frankly what I fear is coming, without mincing words. I sincerely hope I am wrong. I hope that some parents at least are indeed consistently speaking the languages to their children, and I have not simply heard of them.

Central Yup'ik is about the only Yup'ik group that is not lost today. Upper Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, Bristol Bay, the younger generation understand Yup'ik, however do not speak it. The television generation, those born after 1970, in these areas do not understand Yup'ik.

Central Yup'ik families are in the point of turmoil today due to acculturation and outmigration of Natives to urban areas. Studies by the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska Native Language Center indicate we are at the verge of losing the Central Yup'ik if we do not take drastic steps to encourage our young families to speak Yup'ik.

Many of these families are pressured that they must change lifestyles to adhere to the Western World. It is not easy for these families to be caught between two worlds, one that is unkind, one that is caring. Yup'ik people are caring people, with living in a harsh environment wanting a simple lifestyle in the subsistence economies. We have survived for many untold centuries living on resources given to us by the Almighty.

Much work, cooperation and commitment is needed to save our culture and languages. Accepting as fact that we must blindly change to conform to other cultures fairly accurately describes the younger generation in the 1980's. The elders in the villages who understand Native Cultures and Languages are rapidly losing ground to the encroaching and predominant Western Culture. Calista Elders Council will work to enhance this mission through long term strategic plan consisting of workshops, discussions, and meetings of elders and the young. This mission will take a team effort of all Natives living throughout the Calista Region.

Regarding S. 1595, for the reasons as stated in our short narration, Calista Elders Council supports S. 1591, introduced by U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski. S. 1595, once signed into law, will help develop the very core to help save our dying language. We elders understand that we do not hold all the answers to save our native tongue, however, through a united effort of all the young and old, the schools, churches and most importantly the Yup'ik families can we revive ourselves as a genuine people.

This decade will be critical for the survival of the Yup'ik. We have already lost half of our Yup'ik language to English. We have lost important parts of our culture, traditional lifestyle, and even our celebrations to the western world. No one will help our people except ourselves. No other group, Native or non-Native, will help in the survival of our culture and language so much as we can.

S. 1595, once enacted, will establish a foundation for grants needed to formalize Yup'ik Language Centers throughout our villages. Grants must go to the people in the villages who will use these funds for survival and preservation of our dying language. It is not too late to save our language.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Nevak appears in appendix.]

Senator Murkowski. Thank you very much, Agatha Nevak, Secretary of the Calista Elders Council.

Let me just be brief with some questions. Senator Inouye, who has been delayed because of a mechanical problem on the aircraft from Washington, DC, I understand, is coming. I am sure most of you want to be up there.

Let me start with Poldine Carlo, and I will just be very brief. You indicated that in the mission life, nobody slapped your hands with a ruler when you spoke your Native language. But I guess that was prevalent in the other schools. Were those BIA schools, or were they territorial schools?

Ms. Carlo. To correct that, we did not speak our language in school, in class.

Senator Murkowski. You did not?

Ms. Carlo. No; because we went to school to learn the other side of our lifestyle.

Senator Murkowski. So that's why you didn't get your wrists slapped by the nuns.

Ms. Carlo. But as soon as we got out of school—

Senator Murkowski. Okay, thanks for clearing that up. I am just wondering, you talk about the dialects. You said there two dialects that you conversed in mostly, or two dialects among your people. Does that mean you could understand each other?

Ms. Carlo. Oh, yes.

Senator Murkowski. So you were translating back and forth in your mind then, you were fluent.

Ms. Carlo. I couldn't understand Fort Yukon, or Kutchin.

Senator Murkowski. You said you did not teach your eight children?

Ms. Carlo. It didn't enter my mind—

Senator Murkowski. Never entered your mind?

Ms. Carlo. Never. It never did. Because I grew up with my language, and the way of my life, I didn't have to be taught.

Senator **Murkowski**. Right. And it never occurred to you that your children would not be able to speak to your mother.

Ms. **Carlo**. It never did. And now I am sorry that I didn't know at that time.

Senator **Murkowski**. How many grandchildren do you have?

Ms. **Carlo**. Six or seven.

Senator **Murkowski**. And can they speak?

Ms. **Carlo**. No.

Senator **Murkowski**. So it's lost already, unless something is done now.

Ms. **Carlo**. My husband didn't speak the language, but I did. He only knew words he wasn't supposed to know in Indian. [Laughter.]

Senator **Murkowski**. Only words you weren't supposed to know. Are your children interested? Are they of an age now that they are not interested?

Ms. **Carlo**. They never say, but I do tell them our beliefs and such, our Indian beliefs. I know that they do believe. They do believe, they respect my beliefs. So does my husband, even though he was not raised that way, he respects my ways of believing in my Indian way, the way of our potlatches and things like that.

Senator **Murkowski**. Well, you strike me as a very happy person.

Ms. **Carlo**. I am happy.

Senator **Murkowski**. One that is very well adjusted in her life, your children. And you attribute an awful lot of that to your early time in the mission, when you were being brought up, going to school.

Ms. **Carlo**. And also by my grandmother. I was brought up on the mission site, and then my grandmother used to teach us her way of life, from way back.

Senator **Murkowski**. Let me ask you kind of a pointed question, recognizing that you feel that a lot of the contribution was the education you had in the mission, plus what you had from your grandmother. If you look at some of the difficulties we are having now with our young people, not that we didn't have difficulties then, but do you think the influence in your home was more significant than the influence you had when you went to the mission school? Which played the greater role in forming such a happy and well adjusted person?

Ms. **Carlo**. I don't think I could weigh that one way or the other. They both contributed to my way of life right now.

Senator **Murkowski**. That's a fair answer.

Ms. **Carlo**. They were talking about drugs and alcohol the other day. I remember in the village, when I was growing up, the first time a young boy got drunk, he must have been about 17 years old. But that was a big thing in the village, people talked about that for months. Then pretty soon, more young people started doing the same thing. Then before we knew it, there were girls, too.

Senator **Murkowski**. Well, thank you for being with us. David, you talk about the necessity of the parents being able to reach the children, the parents obviously have to be willing to make that kind of commitment of time and effort.

Mr. **Salmon**. Yes; we learn at home, you know. We spoke only our language when we grew up in my time, anyway. We went to the mission school at Fort Yukon. But there too, we spoke our own language. All the Indian children lived together. That's the way we grew up, back 50 years ago.

But right now, we have a language problem. I have five grandchildren, and they all want to speak Indian, their language, now. One of them, he speaks his language, for the last 3 years he practiced and practiced and finally he talked to me, and my granddaughter, too, she talks to me. We have practiced it for the last 3 years at home, not in the Bilingual Program.

I think the third one is interested, too. This language here says, the proposal part, we are afraid we losing our language. It's important to our way of life. We would like our children to speak our language. We should make another program so the elders can teach the children, no paperwork or pencils, primarily just speaking, to do hands-on experience with the language. In the Bilingual Program they learn to write the language. With the new program they could work in conjunction with each other.

So I think the only way they can learn their language—right now I can see—is at home with their elders. This coming November I will talk with our teacher up there, even if I don't get paid, I told him, I am going to start a language speaking program in my home for the schoolchildren. He's willing, so I think we are going to start it, we are going to talk our language so this way they can learn to speak.

Senator Murkowski. Thank you, David Salmon.

John Starr, you indicated that the hymnbooks were in your Native language.

Mr. Starr. Yes.

Senator Murkowski. Were they Episcopal hymns?

Mr. Starr. Yes; Episcopal hymns.

Senator Murkowski. They were written for you in your Native language.

Mr. Starr. Yes; when I get back to Fairbanks, I am going to find out. Because I don't know who published the books, but they were out there. The young people right now are really realizing that we are losing our cultures. They are really enthusiastic about these bills, Georgianna's bill and your bill. I don't know what the school board had written down on what I was supposed to bring down here. They had a meeting that night, and they were supposed to give it to me in the morning.

Senator Murkowski. Well, I think your testimony has been just fine. It represents your experience and that's more important.

Mr. Starr. But the enthusiasm they have right now in the young people, that they have at home, I think they will send that letter to you and it will be in your office.

Senator Murkowski. Okay. And Agatha, thank you for your testimony, and I think the Calista Elders Council and your commitment to the self-help concept and the realization that in the Central Yup'ik you have your language very much alive. I would like to commend the panel on their testimony. I think it is very significant to have the commitment, to realize that if this is going to work, the elders are going to have to play a major role in it.

The elders will not be enough, it will almost have to be a voluntary commitment of the elders to be willing to give of their time, to provide their own personal contribution to the younger people in whatever type of a curriculum is devised, so this can be communicated in the rural areas. We very much appreciate that commitment, and I thank you for your testimony and wish you a very good day.

Ms. **Nevak**. Could I say one more thing?

Senator **Murkowski**. Sure.

Ms. **Nevak**. Thank you, Dr. Krauss.

Senator **Murkowski**. Dr. Krauss has been in and out. He's in the back now.

Ms. **Nevak**. Okay.

Senator **Murkowski**. Yes; we all owe him a great debt of gratitude.

[Applause.]

Senator **Murkowski**. We are going to have to move along here, because it's 12:30 now. I am going to have to call you up in 3-minute presentations, because I do want to adjourn this for Senator Inouye's statement upstairs. He has come a long way, and he is the senior member of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs basically my boss. I know you will want to hear him.

So I am going to move you up and ask that the speaker be at the microphone on the right. If you will shepherd them up. We will give you 3 minutes and when we run out of time we will be out of time, unfortunately.

First is Tammy Shellikoff, the Youth Delegate. Then we want to bring up Cecelia Martz, and after her Lucy Sparck. We will just rotate and keep going. Go ahead, Tammy, because Tammy, the significance of your testimony is that you represent the Youth Delegation. So please proceed. Just give us your words from the heart.

STATEMENT OF TAMMY LEE SHELLIKOFF

Ms. **Shellikoff**. Thank you. I didn't have a speech anyway.

Senator **Murkowski**. That's good.

Ms. **Shellikoff**. Out of 25 percent of our resolutions passed this year by the Youth Convention, all of them had to deal with saving our cultures and language. You guys cannot—I don't think anyone here of any culture can say the youth are not interested in learning the language or any part of our culture. Out of False Pass, we have 80 people and we only have 3 elders left who are able to speak Aleut.

Currently, in the Aleutian Borough School District, False Pass is one of the six, we have started a program of Native art, Aleut art. We have two students in that class. Hopefully, next year, other students and schools will be added to our curriculum.

I came here to support the youth council, saying that we do support this bill fully, and we encourage all of you, even if you don't get paid by the schools, to come in and teach our students their native tongue. It would greatly be appreciated.

When you stated earlier that in the year 2055—I am going to be 55 years old and there will be a lot of cultures that can't speak the native tongue, so please, we will help you guys help us if you guys come to our school. We will try to be as easy on you guys as possible.

[Applause.]

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you, Tammy. You are very articulate. Let me ask you this. Are you taking any language now in school?

Ms. **Shellikoff**. This is kind of odd. As some of you mentioned earlier, the Spanish, Russian, Japanese—I am in my second year of taking Spanish I from Spokane, WA, via satellite.

Senator **Murkowski**. I'll be darned, that's how she gets it, from Spokane, WA, Spanish I, second year.

Ms. **Shellikoff**. Also, our district suggested this year, all six of our schools, have supported Aleut languages in our schools. And every single one of our schools suggested using UAF as a spot, just as Spokane, WA has.

Senator **Murkowski**. Good. It's good to hear that. I'm sure Dr. Krauss is pleased to hear that, too. What age do you think your Native language should be taught, from the standpoint of in school, as opposed to home?

Ms. **Shellikoff**. Right from the beginning.

Senator **Murkowski**. Okay. That's good. Thank you very much, Tammy.

We will ask Cecelia Martz to go next, then Lucy Sparck. Next in line will be Esther Ilutsik. Go ahead, Cecelia.

STATEMENT OF CECILIA MARTZ

Ms. **Martz**. My name is Cecilia Martz. I am an Assistant Professor at the Kuskokwim Campus in Bethel. I am in contact with our college students and many of them who do not speak their own language express real bad frustration at not knowing their own language. Statistics also in our area have shown that students who have been taught in their own language the first years of their school lives have higher English proficiency in the upper grade levels.

We talk about the Yup'ik language being alive and well. We have counted about 14 to 16 villages left with children who speak the language, small children who speak the language. There needs to be, as mentioned by Dr. Krauss and the elders, drastic measures taken. I have a few suggestions.

We need to have official translators and interpreters for places like this. Each of the languages need to have equal status with English. We need to have overwhelming advertisement to Alaskan homes for parents and grandparents to continue the children's and grandchildren's language education.

We do not have to depend totally on the schools to teach the language. But we need to have all those other things happen, too. Children need to see and hear their language in media, both PBS and commercial radio and television. We need teachers, both Native and non-Native, to be at least literate in their language and progressive education in the areas of the language where they are employed.

We need to teach the language at the preschool level, and we need to make sure the programs are run for and by the people themselves. And that's all.

Senator **Murkowski**. Those are excellent suggestions. They will go a long way in contributing towards a meaningful record of this hearing. Those are the kinds of things that are very, very important, specifics on how to do it. Maybe we could bring up some more as Tammy and Cecelia depart the table. We will call on Esther and Janice. Then the next two can come up, Elsie and Martha.

Please go ahead. Let's see, Lucy, you are next.

STATEMENT OF LUCY JONES-SPARCK

Ms. **Sparck**. My name is Lucy Sparck. I am an Associate Professor in behavioral sciences. I am teaching Social Psychology and Counseling courses. I am supporting your S. 1595. I am glad it is there. On a cultural level, language is a very important component of a culture. It is a means by which a culture transmits its philosophies, ideologies, values and belief systems.

The Chipiks and the Yup'iks where I come from, that's their first language. It is a way to make sense of the symbols of its culture. On a personal level, when you lose your language, you lose a section of your culture in which you communicate with others, and you also lose a valuable tool in which you communicate with the population. You also lose a piece of your identity, as well as losing a piece of your pride in yourself.

The State of Alaska has piecemeal programs in place right now, in teaching the language. These are not a significant part of the present education system. What you have are incidental programs born out of grants.

But these are not made to be the main fabric of the education system. People who work within these programs do the best they can, but as long as the present education system is incapable of truly making the Native peoples to design the teachings of their language in the schools in the most significant way, any new grants will not truly change the present system.

This is why this proposal for a new grant has to have strong language in which the state educational system will allow the Natives to design the language programs in their community schools.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much for those specific recommendations, Lucy. I think we should have a discussion, and I would ask the staff to arrange it with the Commissioner of Education for the State of Alaska, to see just how responsive the State might be from the standpoint that you just made, that clearly that has to be in part of the system in order for it to work.

Ms. **Sparck**. Thank you, Senator.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much.

Esther IlutsiK, and then Janice Schroeder, and then Elsie Hopsen and Martha Vlasoff. If you would all please introduce yourself for the record.

STATEMENT OF ESTHER ILUTSIK

Ms. **Ilutsik**. Hello, my name is Esther Ilutsik. I am a teacher in my home village of Aleknagik, Alaska. I am also the President of my Native village corporation, Aleknagik Native Limited. I am also a member of the Ciulistet Committee, which is composed of Native-certified teachers within my area. We have most recently become affiliated with the Bristol Bay Native Association.

The main goal of the Ciulistet Committee is to provide for Native Education leadership. As we all know, with Native languages, there continues to be a need for improving the Native teacher training program, especially in my area where the oral and written language is weak. Very little training is provided. We also need to improve the evaluation process of the programs within the schools.

I support your bill. I think with these grants being extended to the Alaska Native village regional and village corporations is a wonderful opportunity and a challenge for the corporations to become truly involved in Native education.

With this process, I can foresee a positive effort in maintaining and developing the language. The children need to see the commitment from their Native leaders, thus portraying the seriousness of retaining the Native languages.

Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much for that concise statement.

I ask you, as a certified teacher, Esther, how you feel about uncertified or elders coming into a curriculum atmosphere?

Ms. ILUTSIK. I think if they are proficient in the reading and writing of the Native language, they should be given a certificate.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And who would ascertain if they were proficient enough?

Ms. ILUTSIK. I think that would be up to—this is my opinion—it would be up to the Alaska Native Language Center.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much.

Janice Schroeder, and Elsie Hopson, Martha Vlasoff, and John Waghiyi, Jr.

Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF JANICE JONES SCHROEDER

Ms. SCHROEDER. I am Janice Jones Schroeder. I am not speaking and testifying in support of the bill as an Alaska Native, but as President-elect for the State Association of Bilingual Education.

It is interesting that I am testifying in support of this bill, because bilingual education was my journey to Alaska. I worked for one of the 16 bilingual, multi-functional centers in the United States. I work as an educational specialist, and travel throughout the State of Alaska.

I have been a bilingual educator and advocate for preservation of Native indigenous language for the last 12 years. I have served as the New York State language delegate, served on the National Association Executive Board, served on the National Indian Bilingual Task Force, and also ran one of the National Indian Bilingual Centers prior to coming to Alaska.

I will support your bill, on behalf of the State Association, and in addition Representative Lincoln's bill. I would like to see those bills work in concert with a bill that is being introduced by Representative McLean. It does issue certification for language teachers. It will not be—it will be for them to teach, and it will elevate the status of the teachers to teaching status.

So I would like to see those two bills work in concert with each other. I am in support of elders and people that are fluent in the languages being allowed to speak and teach in the schools.

I underscored my comments with Representative Lincoln, having been from a Tribe in North Carolina, there is 500 years contact that we have lost any semblance of our language. I view the speaking of our language as a human right, given to us by the Creator.

As the Creator gave us all languages, he had us in a master plan. He chose what group and what individuals should be in those groups to speak the languages, as he gave the birds the individual songs, the animals of the woods, he gives us our languages. No one has the right to take those away.

And 500 years later, we are still talking about something that should never have happened in the beginning. I relinquish the rest of my time, and will let you know that I am in support, and a really good advocate for the preservation of indigenous languages of all Native peoples.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Janice, for your very professional comments relative to your dedication, commitment and extraordinary background. We are very happy to see you in Alaska, committed to further the efforts we are talking about here.

Let me remind the witnesses that you can submit written statements. The record of this United States Senate hearing will remain open for three weeks. We do ask that you fill out those cards, because it helps the reporter place you with your statement. Let's go ahead with the next witness.

STATEMENT OF ELSIE HOPSON ITTA, BARROW, AK

Ms. HOPSON. Thank you very much, Senator Murkowski.

[Remarks in native language.]

I thank you very much. My name is Elsie Hopson Itta from Barrow. I am a certified teacher, and I work with the North Slope Borough School District, coordinating the Inupiat Language Program, but I guess you could say the bicultural education.

I thank my grandmother, who is no longer here, for speaking to me and my brother in Inupiat. I also thank all the parents who speak today in the Native language. I think we are pretty fortunate in some areas of the State of Alaska to still maintain our Native language and culture. As much as I would like to say positive things, because that's the bottom line, the attitude, the attitude to Native people, their culture, their language, is the bottom line here.

The process of deculturization probably started when my people were mandated to leave their aboriginal grounds up in the North Slope, to uproot their homeland, and go to Barrow. They were told that all children between such and such an age had to attend school. They uprooted their homeland.

I know we can't belabor that issue today. I would like to be positive on the remarks. If you really had provided simultaneous translators at this hearing, I'm sure Agatha and the other people who spoke in English earlier would really have appreciated it. I would have appreciated it, even though I consider myself pretty literate in the English language, I still like to hear Inupiat spoken elsewhere.

Yes, I agree with all other people who have said public promotion and support is important. I also have my feelings on who would be best qualified to teach the Native language in the schools. I would like to say one other thing, about the recent move that the State Department of Education made this past summer, by the disbanding the statewide Council on Bilingual Multicultural Education. I think that was a very unwise move. I think either reinstatement of that council or starting something similar on a statewide basis is really needed.

Also, I hear this comment all the time. All these Native languages—there should be no question of having them recognized nationally as a foreign language. Because some schools require students coming out of the high schools to have some background in foreign language. There should be no problem in acknowledging Inupiat, Yup'ik, Athabascan as foreign languages. I don't like it, calling the indigenous languages foreign languages, but if that's what it's going to take, certify it.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you. You put an interesting twist on it—it really is not a foreign language, it's an indigenous language, but your point is well taken. In order to make it qualify for an advanced requirement, they would have to clarify them as foreign language. This would be an interesting thing to pursue, and I would appreciate it, if you would care to elaborate in a written statement a little further.

Because I think you have touched on something that really deserves some examination. It would be interesting to see what kind of reaction we would get from the academic community on trying to change that requirement to include the indigenous language to qualify for a foreign language if you are going on to a higher education, or you need so much to graduate from high school or what have you to get into a college.

And I assume you would have to have some degree of proficiency as well. I might add, recognizing your recommendations, that we will be getting copies of the tapes of this hearing. This is the best I can do for you, Elsie, and the Alaska Native Language Center, I think, will take upon the obligation of translating this into the Native language. We will try and do something along those lines. Is that right?

Ms. **Linkous**. We are translating the Native language testimony.

Senator **Murkowski**. Yes; when they spoke in the Native language, that will be translated into English. Of course, that's just for the benefit of the rest of us. But we can go a long way.

What I would like to do is suggest to you that maybe next year at this time, we can do this again, and maybe we can have simultaneous translation. In the meantime, I want to move on because we are going to run out of time, and I am not going to be able to accommodate everybody, and I want to do the best I can.

Martha Vlasoff, and then John Waghiyi.

Ms. **Vlasoff**. Senator, I would like to go last. If you don't mind, I would like John to speak. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF JOHN WAGHIYI, JR.

Mr. **WAGHIYI**. Thank you, Senator. My name is John Waghiyi. This is my daughter, Langqu, our family calls her "Lang-Lang." Her English name is Karena. I am a St. Lawrence Island Yup'ik. I am a parent, as you can see. I am the President of the Native Village of Savoonga, commonly called the IRA Council. I am an educator at the Savoonga school, non-certified. Although I am certified through the Alaska Department of Education as what you call a locally-recognized expert.

The bill that you are proposing is an excellent bill. It is a long time in coming, and I am very happy to see it. We support the bill.

I want to give you a short insight of our people and the language that we speak. Savoonga has been a community for only about 75 years. Our mother village is Gambell. Many of our people migrated over from Chukatka, commonly called Siberia. We still have people who were born in villages on the other side. Our counterparts are commonly called Siberian Yup'ik.

I just want to say that language is a birthright, just as that lady who was speaking two seats from me on my right was saying a while ago. Language is a birthright. This little girl I have with me will grow up speaking the language first. She will learn English eventually, when she enters elementary school.

Our language is taught first at the home, and then in the schools we have what you call bilingual instructors. The bilingual instructors have to fall within the constraints of the educational system. They are restricted to teaching Yup'ik in only one-half hour to 1 hour segments daily. Because of the way the educational system is structured, there is no total integration.

This bill is wonderful. We know there are other people in the state who need the language structure to teach them the language. I think the Youth Convention is going to make an impact. It has to come from the individuals who want to learn the language. Also, we as parents have an obligation as well as the elders.

Going back to what I started to say, the St. Lawrence Island Yup'ik is taught to every student who goes to the elementary program, as well as the high school program. We have a locally-imposed requirement for all our high school students to take St. Lawrence Island Yup'ik language and culture, the 9th and 10th grade program where I teach St. Lawrence Island Yup'ik literacy and culture, the children already know the language.

We just teach them the literacy and then the culture and some language. But I wanted to express the support on this bill, and also give you a little insight on what we do on St. Lawrence Island.

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. Thank you very much, John. I appreciate that. We will look forward one of these days to hopefully having Karena testify in the Yup'ik language. I went over 2 years ago in June to Providenija. We took a number of our Native people with us. That was the first time we had had a commercially approved flight from Nome to Providenija. Our folks, our Native people, were in Hawaiian shirts and so forth.

There was a little apprehension as to what kind of reception we would have on the other side, because we were aware that the Siberian Yup'ik people were there, and some of them had not talked to or seen each other for a long, long time. It didn't take more than 30 seconds for it to become evident that they could speak to one another. The only difference was that our group had Hawaiian shirts, and of course the Siberian Yup'iks didn't.

But they performed the same dances, and even though that culture had been closed for 35 or 40 years, maybe 50, since the war, certainly, they were able to pick right up and proceed, and it was very gratifying, a very emotional experience.

Thank you for your testimony. We will move now to Martha Vlasoff. And I will ask some more folks to come up. Dabney Van Liere, Harley Sundown, and John Aiken. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF MARTHA VLASOFF

Ms. **VLASOFF**. Yes, Senator; my name is Martha Vlasoff. I am the Director of the Tatitlik Museum in our village, and also I serve on the North Pacific Rim Cultural Preservation Committee, which was just started this past year. The people in Nana started, when they settled Anksa, they started out by asking the elders what would be the best way to run their area region. But unfortunately in our area, this is one of the last things we are coming to.

At any rate, I want to thank you for your work in language preservation. I have a written statement about what we are doing in our area. I also have a resolution to the AFN informing an association of Native people that are in the effort of preserving cultural heritage in our state. And also the notes from the workshop I just attended, the National Parks Workshop on the Keepers of the Treasures, which is an organization of the United States for the preservation of cultural heritage.

One thing I would like to do is just, instead of me testifying about this, I was wondering, I am so glad you are concerned about the Native people and the preservation of language. I would like to give you a gift, if it's all right with my friend Nina Olsen, if she would sing you a song in Alutiiq.

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. Please. It would be most appreciated. Can you translate for us, or is it necessary?

Ms. **OLSEN**. I will quickly sing a song I translated. I will do it in Alutiiq and in English.

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. Tell us where you are from, what village?

Ms. **OLSEN**. I live in Kodiak now.

[Song sung in native language.]

One day at a time, Sweet Jesus, is all I'm asking of you. Lord help me today, show me the way, what I have to do. Yesterday's gone, Sweet Jesus, and tomorrow may never be mine. Lord help me today, show me the way, one day at a time.

[Applause.]

Senator **MURKOWSKI**. That's lovely. Thank you so much, Martha. I think that made a very significant contribution to our record, and I might add it was much more beautiful in its native tongue than it was translated into English.

We are down to Dabney Van Liere. Then we have Harley, then we have John Aiken. Next we have Ruth Ridley—she's not coming. She has submitted a statement for the record. Then we have Josephine Riley. Last, Patrick Anderson. That's where we are. We will go ahead with Dabney. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF DABNEY VAN LIERE

Ms. **Van Liere**. Thank you, Senator Murkowski. I would also like to thank the members of the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs for allowing us to speak with you regarding S. 1595, which proposes to enact a bill entitled the Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act.

I do have written testimony I will submit, and summarize. I am speaking on my own behalf at this time. I am an associate editor of the Valdez Pioneer newspaper. From 1981 through 1987, I was a broadcast reporter and bilingual coordinator for radio KOTZ in Kotzebue. I will explain more about that later.

I urge you to enact this bill to preserve and enhance Native Alaskan languages, and to enact any future bills that seek to enhance and preserve the Native languages of all the Native peoples of the continental United States, Native Hawaiians, the Chamorros of Guam, and the aboriginal peoples of any and all U.S. territories, trust territories and associations.

Senator **Murkowski**. That's a big order. We have to crawl before we walk before we run.

Ms. **Van Liere**. Yes; it is, but I think with your Native American Languages Act—

Senator **Murkowski**. Let's start with Alaska and see what we can do here first. Go ahead.

Ms. **Van Liere**. In my opinion, this bill if enacted will finally show some respect for Alaska Native languages, respect that is sorely overdue. The Native languages of Alaska, as well as those in Hawaii and the lower 48 have lasted thousands of years, much longer than English, and possibly much longer than Greek, yet now many Native languages lie on their deathbeds and many Alaska Native young people along with them, primarily because of the past total assimilation policies of the United States.

I would like to tell you a little bit about how that policy came about. Considering they started schools in Hawaii, and I am part Native Hawaiian, my Native language is Hawaiian. There were schools in Hawaii, where they taught in Hawaiian. They taught math, science, religion, they taught all of the subjects in the Native language. However, the United States, right after they decided to annex Hawaii, U.S. officials instituted English-only schools. One of the reasons was that the plantation owners wanted more land. They wanted to put down any Hawaiians who were aggressive or any Hawaiians who wanted to be united. I insert that into my testimony.

Total assimilation helped to create the melting pot of peoples we have in the United States. It also helped to unite new Americans with foreign backgrounds under a common flag instead of a multitude of flags like Europe. However, total assimilation also lulled our brains, so now many Alaska Natives my age and younger have lost both their language and the physical skills needed to survive in Native communities.

They have a hard time speaking with elders and figuring out how they can use their non-Native educations within their community. They also have a hard time feeling confident and useful in non-Native communities, because oftentimes they have not received the same amount of adequate schooling that all American students are supposed to receive.

Alaska Natives are not the only indigenous people feeling this deadly stress. Indigenous peoples of the lower 48 and Hawaii feel it as well.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I wonder if you could summarize. You are making your point, but I would rather hear it in your own words.

Ms. VAN LIERE. What I am trying to get at is not only here in Alaska but also in Hawaii and the lower 48, the mind has been lulled so that you cannot speak the Native language, you cannot talk with your elders. Not only with Native peoples, but also with non-Native peoples, too.

I had a great-grandmother who used to speak pure Portuguese, as well as a grandfather who spoke Hawaiian, but he luckily spoke English, because I couldn't understand him in Hawaiian. But I could never speak Portuguese, because it was not taught in any U.S. school in the area where I was.

What I am trying to get at too is the fact that many Americans have lost their former abilities to communicate and relate with foreign speaking nations. That's one of the reasons why we are pushing our young people to now learn the Native languages, as well as Russian, Chinese, Japanese, and the languages of Europe and the Pacific Rim.

In my opinion, America's lack of respect for the languages of these countries, and the languages of the indigenous American peoples has caused this stress, so that you cannot speak with other peoples in other areas, such as the Pacific Rim, when actually many of the languages are related. I'm not saying where they came from, if they came from Alaska originally—and that's a possibility—or if they came clear across Asia.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I wonder if it isn't because we are a little too lazy to learn someone else's language?

Ms. VAN LIERE. That may be true. When I was in Kotzebue, as a bilingual coordinator—

Senator MURKOWSKI. I must in fairness to the other witnesses stick to the time commitment. You have gone twice as long as anyone else. Thank you. I hate to rush you, but in fairness I simply have to do it.

Harley Sundown.

STATEMENT OF HARLEY SUNDOWN, SCAMMON BAY, AK

Mr. SUNDOWN. I am Harley Sundown from Scammon Bay. Our local school board is proposing a program to incorporate Native language only, kindergarten through third grade, through our lower Yukon school district. We have some obstacles we are facing.

No. 1, we want to include Native morality and ethics in the curriculum. Right now, the Constitution of the United States says that if it's part of a religion or Native religion or any kind of religion, it can't be in it. We would like you to include that in the bill, where an exception would be made for Native morality and ethics, so it can be taught in the school along with the Native language.

Also, our local school boards don't have enough power to make decisions that are not only advisory, but to actually do something. That's what we are trying to do. Because we feel that—

Senator MURKOWSKI. Do you have specific reference to Native ethics and morality that are unlike the conventional—I wonder if you could narrowly define what you have in mind?

Mr. SUNDOWN. Your culture is competitive. Our culture is cooperative. We share, you take—

Senator MURKOWSKI. You've made your point. I understand. Go ahead.

Mr. SUNDOWN. We feel our youth are caught in between two worlds, two societies. We want to pull our youth back into Native culture and reach out, like the Japanese, reach out to America and take the technology and still keep their culture and way of life. That is something we are trying to do at home, to make sure we ensure the success of our school system through our Native language only program. It is a pilot project we are looking at.

I will be submitting a written report to you on the progress of that program, so that you will know exactly what we are doing. And that is not technical, that is something we are doing, and hopefully maybe the State and other areas can look at our program and see exactly how we are implementing this program.

Senator MURKOWSKI. You brought up some very interesting points. I would recommend you feel free to elaborate a little further.

You bring up the Japanese society, and you have a homogenous society, there are very few outside influences, no minorities to speak of in Japan. It is virtually closed, and as a consequence they can do certain things. It's very difficult—we don't do it in our democracy. Your corporations, the way they function of course, are a premise to the Western structure of ownership. The obvious question is the tightrope that you walk in this transition.

Mr. SUNDOWN. Right. The bill you are proposing will not work unless we localize the effort and make sure that our input, what we want to do is in there. We can't have a bill that is a giant. We want to localize our efforts.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I understand. That's why I want your specific recommendations on how to do it. Submit it for the record so we can take it into account. Thank you very much for staying within your time commitment.

I might add that I have been advised that this bill specifically allows the villages to design their own program. So I would think you could get into—I hate to use general terms—but morality and ethics could certainly be included.

John Aiken, John's from Barrow, and is with the University of Alaska.

STATEMENT OF JOHN AIKEN, BARROW, AK

Mr. AIKEN. Yes, sir; I will be very brief. I just wrote this down when I was in here, I didn't expect to speak.

Anyway, my name is John Foster Aiken, born in Barrow, and named after my father's father. I am one of four John Aikens, which you might find unusual. To me and my namesakes, it is a reality. My Inupiat name is Aviuganna, which name applies with me at home and everywhere. I am a student at UAA, Anchorage, and have been attending that university for the past 3 years.

Of those 3 years, the first semester I started college, my understanding from the language department of the University of Alaska, Anchorage itself lacked a majority of Alaska Native languages. The University served other foreign languages, which we are not equivalent to Alaska Native language.

By my understanding from a Spanish teacher at UAA, the lack of Alaska Native language was noticed by this University 11 years ago. My intention, after I had talked with the Spanish teacher and students, me and an official of UAA wrote up a petition to have teachers, students and staff sign their signature as to what language preference they wanted to learn.

I submitted over 100 signatures in language preference. To my surprise, Alaska Pacific University was also lacking Alaska Native language. After finding that out, my intention got heavy. Actually, it hurt my feelings. When those two universities were lacking a language that is badly needed here in Anchorage.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, John. I appreciate that. Of course, from the standpoint of the universities, they are limited in what they can do, too. But to point our your disappointment is appropriate, and good luck as you commit to your advanced education.

Ruth Ridley submitted her statement for the record and we very much appreciate that.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Ridley appears in appendix.]

Senator MURKOWSKI. Now we have Josephine Riley, then Patrick Anderson.

STATEMENT OF JOSEPHINE RILEY

Ms. RILEY. Senator, I am very happy to be here. I am privileged, I am very happy to be here to talk to you in person.

I just came from a parent committee meeting last Friday in Fairbanks. The topic was Indian language speaking in the schools. This is what I wrote, I will just say it as I wrote it. I would like my Native language to be taught in our village of Minto for the reason that our children could get their languages and self esteem, and they could sing their Indian songs, and learn them faster if they knew the language.

There are about 40 people that can speak it. Among the 40 people, there are five old people that have to move to Fairbanks. I really encourage all our people and all our villages to get this language going before we lose all our people. There are 80 or 70 children in our school of Minto.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And there is no language opportunity for them in their native tongue?

Ms. RILEY. No; we have a Minto culture program going. The elders teach twice a week, and the elders that are there take turns, not one elder doing one whole month. We do it differently by week.

We tell stories to the children of long ago, and the children wrote a book and I hope I brought one. It's really neat. I think they did a great job, I know they did a great job. When we tell stories in English, we lost the meaning of it in Indian.

Thanks a lot.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Josephine Riley. I think with knowing the village of Minto as I do, the opportunity to have so many elders that still speak the language, I would suggest that you not hesitate to try and start a program of your own in Minto to have the elders provide maybe 1 or 2 nights a week, an opportunity for the young people to begin to learn.

I know it's very difficult to do unless you can have a formal situation, where it can be structured. But don't wait. I appreciate the opportunity to come over and hunt every year. I shoot a lot of holes in your sky, and I don't get many ducks. But I still come to Minto.

Patrick Anderson, Alaska Heritage Foundation. We would be interested in your views.

Mr. ANDERSON. Thank you, Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I might add that there are two more that have asked to come up. We will accommodate them, and that will be the conclusion. Jonathan Solomon from Fort Yukon, and Rachel Craig from Northwest Arctic Borough. Be sure and give us your names on those little cards.

STATEMENT OF PATRICK M. ANDERSON

Mr. ANDERSON. Senator, to cover formalities very quickly, my English name is Patrick Anderson. My Tlingit name is Dokhudane. I am an Eagle, a member of the Shankukady clan, from the Thunderbird House in the Akutan area.

I am an assistant professor of public administration and law science at the University of Alaska Southeast. I have been a member of the Alaska Bar Association for 13 years. I have been elected to leadership positions and have the respect of many elders in presenting my position. I am a member of the Board of Directors of Sea Alaska Corporation, of the Sea Alaska Heritage Foundation, and have been the elected president of the Southeast Alaska Native Education Commission for the past 2 years.

I speak, however, as the father of a 6-year old, and as the expectant father, in 4 weeks, of my second child. I am a non-Tlingit speaker, I am the second generation in my family not to speak Tlingit. My mother attended the Pious X Boarding School in Scagway, where she was prevented from speaking it. She attended there from age 4½ until she went to the Mount Edgecombe Boarding School.

I have been educated in the public school systems, and I have a fine education, much of which has been provided for by funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the various institutions I have attended. I live in an urban area. My daughter, at the age of four and a half, exhibited great interest in Native cultural activities. Now when I want her to try a new food, I explain to her that it's Indian food and she eats it.

I told her I would try and learn the Tlingit language with her. I tried to enroll her in the Johnson O'Malley program, but because I am an educated, well-paid professional, I didn't meet the income limits. So she missed that opportunity to interact with other Native children. She missed that opportunity to learn what small portions of Tlingit language were taught in that program.

Together with other Native professional men of my generation who have children, we attempted to find someone who would teach us as a family unit so that we could converse with our children, but have been unable to do that. As an educated young man, I have sought out every bit of Tlingit educational material. I believe I own it all, but it's all very sophisticated and not presented in a way that we can learn for ourselves.

We are in a minority in an urban area and we find it very difficult to affect public policy to provide for those options for our children. I am here to tell you that I in my position as a leader in the Southeast Alaska Native community like your bill. I like the freedom that is given to the individual groups to put into public policy their options to preserve.

And I pledge to you and to Representative Lincoln and to Representative Maclean that I will use the authority that has been given to me by our shareholders and by our elders and whatever other authority they entrust me with to see that a bill like this is enacted. I believe strongly that this is one of the most important issues of public policy that I as a young Native man will face in the next 30 years.

Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Patrick, for that statement. I think you can recognize, because you have dealt with the bureaucracy, how important it is to try and structure this thing so it is not laden with layers of administrative oversight that detract from the objective. The problem as you pointed out, is you can't find anybody that will provide you or your children with an opportunity to learn your Native language. Yet I am told by the authority, that is of course Dr. Krauss, that in your area, there are 2,000 people that still speak Tlingit, the youngest speaker is in his forties. It is estimated that the language will be dead in the year 2030.

Thank you very much.

Mr. ANDERSON. I might add, this is an emotional issue for me. But I do represent organizations that will submit written testimony and will support the legislation.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you. This is the last group we are having. We have Rachel Craig, I guess Jonathan Solomon is not here, and Edna MacLean. Ladies, you are going to wind up the session, and we look forward to your testimony. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF RACHEL CRAIG, KOTZEBUE, AK

Ms. CRAIG. Thank you, Senator Murkowski. My name is Rachel Craig. I am from Kotzebue, I was born and raised there. I work for the Northwest Slope Arctic Borough in Kotzebue. I am a NANA shareholder and a council member in the IRA. I am President of the Kotzebue Elders Council and Corporate Secretary to the NANA Regional Elders Council.

This language, losing our language, and the risk of losing the language, has preoccupied a lot of our time. We have tried many ways to develop curriculum, and I commend the school district for putting a lot of effort into it. But because of not enough funding, what they do is still not enough. We still have complaints in the communities, that they need to use their own subregional dialect, because it is embarrassing to the young people to be learning another one, teenagers being sensitive to that kind of thing.

I think one of the things we could do is work with some people who know linguistics and education and work with the local elders to build a curriculum for that community. We have villages who would like to do that.

Another thing, because of the language becoming at risk, is that our communities are wanting to do immersion programs. I don't know if our school district is prepared for that. They don't want to touch anything that will cause them to fail, cause the school to fail. We have a unique situation, where some of us who speak good English don't know enough Inupiaq, and those who speak fluent Inupiaq don't know enough English. So we need people from both sides to work together to develop these instruments that would teach our children the language.

So we are also thinking of community education, that after the school hours, that the community get together with the local Native people, so the children as well as their parents who never had a chance to learn the language, could be learning the language at the same time, with hands-on instruction in the Inupiaq language, learning to do things and learning the language at the same time. Because that's the method in which Inupiaq was learned, not just intellectual knowledge, but also hands-on.

In all our efforts to try to come up with ways and funding to work on these very serious problems in our area, there are a few things that come up that offer a ray of hope, and this legislation that you are authoring and sponsoring is one of those things that gives that little light. We are really in support of it, and we have high hopes for its passage. I know we are going to use it.

After all these years of getting punished, I was one of those students who was punished in school for using the language, and after many years of punitive measures, you begin to feel very inferior just for being Native. Some of us are still fighting that inferiority complex, you know that was drummed into us.

But we have also learned to be assertive. So we have high hopes for this legislation to pass. We support it, and I know with the help of our elders and our educators and people, the community people, we can make it work to salvage our language.

Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Rachel. You are very assertive, and it's very appropriate. You have presented your case with the reality that you are determined to accomplish this. I can't think of any greater contribution you can make to your people than the contribution of maintaining the language.

Ms. CRAIG. Thank you. So much of the rest of the culture hangs on the language.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Absolutely. I couldn't agree with you more.

Edna MacLean, you have the distinction of being the last of our witnesses, I think somewhere in the neighborhood of 25 witness. You have the last word.

STATEMENT OF EDNA MacLEAN, BARROW, AK

Ms. MacLean. Thank you very much. I am glad you have given me the opportunity. My name is Edna MacLean. I am an Inupiaq from Barrow, AK. I am a member of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference. I am a member of the Executive Council and currently a graduate student, at Stanford University. I taught at the University of Alaska for about 15 years, helped to establish the Inupiaq degree program, and also worked with Dr. Krauss and others at the University of Alaska to develop the grammar, the dictionary and reading materials for the Inupiag language degree program.

I have also worked with the Department of Education here in the State, and I would like to go on record as saying that I am in support of the bill that you have introduced, S. 1595. I would like to thank you, because it was not many years ago that Molly Peterson and I during a bilingual conference here in Anchorage, drafted a resolution that was passed by the conference, asking the commissioner of education at that time to publicly announce that the teaching of Native languages in the schools, in Alaska's public schools, was not detrimental to the academic performance of the students.

We felt it was a necessary process that needed to occur, because of what you might call the brainwashing of our parents, and us to some extent, that the use of our Native languages in our schools and at home would be detrimental to the learning of English.

As you know, the bilingual laws within the U.S. speak to the transition of speakers of another language into English. It is primarily to help those students who do not know English to transition into English. And that has been the nature of some of our bilingual programs here, too. I think because of that, the thinking and attitude of the parents had not changed very much in our communities.

So I see this process as very necessary. Those who are in power, and those who are in policymaking positions need to come forth and support the teaching of Native languages and the retention of Native languages in our communities. I am glad there is a focus on communities in this bill, that it is all right for you to speak your language.

I am sure you have consulted a lot of research as you prepared this bill. Because it is very much in line with a lot of the research that is happening right now in terms of how the incorporation of the Native language and culture in the public schools reduces the absenteeism in the schools, as well as improves the academic achievement of those students involved. That ties heavily into the self esteem and the feeling of comfort in the schools, as the students realize that their languages and cultures are just as important as the English language and culture.

What I would like to add is that since I belong to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and since we know that the Inupiaq people, as well as some of the Yup'ik people and the Athabascan people are citizens of different countries, for instance we, the Inuit people, we are in the United States, Canada and Greenland, and the Siberian Yup'iks are in the U.S. as well as the U.S.S.R., and some of the Athabascan people as well as Tlingits in Alaska and Canada, I think we may go a bit further if we pool resources in terms of the types of teacher training programs that have been established in Canada, as well as in the production of materials.

I thank you very much for your time.

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much, Edna MacLean. Let me thank all the witnesses. I think that what we have done with this Senate hearing of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs is establish a very important foundation, if you will, of the people that are involved and their commitment to the continuity of their language.

I would remind all of us that it is not up to government, it is up to the conviction of the people. Government can assist in the process, can contribute to the process. I am committed to doing that, along with the appropriate representatives of your state government, because it has to be hand-in-hand. Clearly, the state department of education, the commissioner of education, has to play a very major role in this type of commitment.

But it is the determination of you people, professionally and otherwise, that is going to determine whether this is going to work. I would be interested, and I will make this pledge to you, that there is going to be another convention of the AFN next year. I think it would be appropriate to try and hold, next year at this time, another hearing of this committee in Anchorage in conjunction with the AFN convention.

Because this gives us an opportunity to have you, both from the professional and academic areas as well as the rural areas together in a forum where you are more readily reachable. We have most of our hearings back in Washington, D.C., but it is very inconvenient and very expensive to travel there.

Let's pledge to meet again, and see what our measurement is, collectively, from where we are today in this process as to where we will be a year from now, and through the dedication of such individuals as Dr. Krauss and Edna MacLean and many others who professionally are committed to this process, it behooves you to help us develop a working model that is achievable as a starter.

I often find that the government process becomes so layered with evaluations, studies and considerations that they never quite get off the ground with the real need, as evidenced by one of the last witnesses. It was John Waghiyi, the Yup'ik, who said he wanted to make sure his little girl knew the language. She could learn it, but Patrick couldn't find it for his daughter in Southeastern Alaska among the Tlingits.

That's the kind of thing we want to have operational, the ability for people who are committed and dedicated and want to learn it, to have that opportunity. I think the voluntary effort of the elders to step up, not step up with the provision that they get the assurance that somebody in state or Federal Government is going to pay $5, or $6, or $9 or $13 an hour, is very important. That's what's going to bring this thing into fruition.

I think we have got a good place to start. I'm told we had roughly 150 people in here today. We have gone on since about 10 o'clock. It's 1:40 p.m. now, so if you have an unspoken thought, again we will keep the record open for 3 weeks.

I want to thank you. Let's look back 1 year from now and see where we are, and whether the bureaucracy has made it so cumbersome that we are slow to get off the starting block, or whether we can in 1 year point to some successes that are actually operational. Dr. Krauss, we will be looking awfully heavily to you and your colleagues in the academic community, as well as the people of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

I thank all my colleagues for the commitment of time and effort they have made, Mel Jones, who has been the reporter over there. For those of you who want copies of the entire record, it will be a while, I suspect 6 or 8 weeks. We will be happy to provide that to you.

I guess that takes care of it. If there are any details or any material you specifically want from my staff, we can arrange that here. You will have them, Jenny Linkous will be happy to provide you with whatever we can provide. She is on my staff on Washington, DC, and Linda Schaffer of our office here, who is over in this corner, can help, because she is in residence here in Anchorage.

Thanks for being with us, and thanks for your commitment, and the hearing on the matter of the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act and the specific bill S. 1595 is officially concluded as part of the record of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs. We wish you a very good day and a very successful convention. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 1:42 p.m., the committee adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

ALASKAN VOICES LIVE

KYUK RADIO STATION—BETHEL

CALLER: JUDITH ALLEN, KOTZEBUE, AK

Ms. ALLEN. What I wanted to say was that I listened to everybody that testified this morning and they were real good. And what I wanted to say is that I appreciate Senator Murkowski for responding to the concerns of Alaska Native Language so far, for us to talk Eskimo languages.

My name is Judith Allen. I have been involved with bilingual education for quite some time, in the classroom, in the community, and in the media, teaching partially daily words through the radio, KOTV radio. I really appreciate what Senator Murkowski is trying to do today, to get input from people from the state.

The people that testified really hit what I always think about, every one of them. The thing that bothers me now is that they talk about using the elders for a resource. My concern is that they are dying. What if they die? Who is going to teach the language?

That is why I'm glad—we need to start documenting as much as possible the language, or teach it, Eskimo stories or elder speak, document all of this. You heard me talk about trying to teach it on the radio, but that is not enough.

The more I think about it, we should start to hit the young parents. And how we can reach them is through some adult education. I really go with that person, the Nome caller, that mentioned this, because you can't do it alone. They have to hear it at home at the same time.

The money that they are going to pass, they should include teaching the adult education, like the persons that we have. The colleges everywhere, college extension, we have [inaudible] here, you must have one down there somewhere, that if we could hit the parents, it would be nice if the kids could hear it at home as well, not just hearing it at the school. The school can't educate them alone. They've got to hear the language at home and outdoors, when they are playing out.

My goal is always if we could have even signs out there like the stop signs, or in the hallways and the doorways, that would help also. If we could make a law about this, make signs out there. The law is possible, if the legislature can pass it.

When I try to teach it in the classroom the only students that pass the grade are the kids that hear it at home and it comes from way back. And that is why right now these young parents don't even speak it, and that is why some of the money that they are going to give should go to the adult education, to teach bilingual classes for adult education. That would maybe help get it going.

Because these elders won't live forever. Right now, almost every month we lose an elder in our region. I am an elder myself and sometimes I am real sickly. I won't teach it on the radio forever, either. So I'm glad that we should start to document every possible Native word as much as possible.

But we need money for that. We need to teach the parents, the young parents. And this is just what I wanted to say, just thank you so much.

Mr. KENNEDY. Good morning, and welcome to Alaskan Voices Live. Our program today originates from Bethel. We operate here in Bethel on a 7 second delay, so I am going to turn down the volume of my own rig over here, and ask you if you do call in, to do the same thing.

We are expecting a call from the Office of Alaska Senator Frank Murkowski. Mike Heatwole said that he would call us about this time. So we are expecting a call from him. Our topic is going to be "Alaskan Native Languages" and that legislation would promote, enhance and keep Alaskan Native languages intact if at all possible.

We have a special arrangement with Senator Frank Murkowski's office. If you call in on this program and if you identify yourself, you can, in effect, testify in favor of the legislation. Senator Murkowski held hearings in Anchorage October 19th, the final day of the Alaska Federation of Natives convention in Anchorage and held hearings on the preservation of Alaska Native languages.

So we are going to continue that process, but this time you don't have to travel to Anchorage. You don't have to travel to Washington, DC. You can testify by calling us at 1-800-478-3654. If you live in Bethel, you can call us at 543-3131. We have a toll-free number, 1-800-478-3654.

Senator Murkowski's office told us that the Senator is introducing legislation to get the Federal Government to spend some money on that and we are awaiting a call from Senator Murkowski's office.

In the meantime, you can call us and you can, in effect, testify. We are going to make a cassette copy of this radio program and we are going to send it to Senator Murkowski's office and they have agreed, Senator Murkowski has agreed, as well, to make part of the radio program part of the testimony. So, you can do that.

In the meantime, Pete Twitchell is here and Pete has learned some of his own Native language, had to relearn it a little bit. Pete, if you could spend a minute or so here, and tell us about some of your attempts and successful attempts to relearn the language of your ancestors.

CALLER: PETE TWITCHELL

Mr. TWITCHELL. Back from the kindergarten and elementary grades on up through high school, I think the school system is teaching just the English language. I think the pendulum there swayed too much to one side. And the Native language was a neglected language in the school system when I was growing up.

I did hear some of it at home. My mother spoke a lot of it, predominantly Native language in the house and at home. My father spoke a lot of English because he had a lot of non-Y'upik friends. But I did hear him converse in Y'upik also.

So, that was in my mind all the time. It was stored away, I guess. But going through the school and not speaking any Y'upik in the classroom and not being encouraged to, I didn't speak it. I had some friends who spoke it. I spoke back to them in English and they spoke to me in Y'upik. But it took a while for me to feel comfortable speaking my language.

Mr. KENNEDY. Okay, thank you Pete. I think we have a call on line 2 from the Office of Senator Frank Murkowski. Mike Heatwole is on the line, I believe. Good morning, you are on Alaskan Voices Live. Is this Mike Heatwole?

Mr. HEATWOLE. Yes; I just wanted to say on behalf of Senator Murkowski, who happens to be on the Senate floor voting, right now, I would like to invite all the residents of Bethel and the surrounding area to air their views today on Senator Murkowski's legislation to help protect and preserve Alaska's Natives languages.

All the comments that are taken today will be entered into the permanent record on this issue and this record will be the document that other members of the Senate will look at when they consider this important legislation.

And, as an Alaskan, it is very important for you to air your views, so everyone here in Washington will understand your point of view. I would just like to thank everyone in advance for the concern I hope they air on this important issue.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Mike. Can you explain a little bit what—first of all what the legislation, how much money is involved and what the goal of the legislation is, and what the role of the Federal Government is in preserving Alaska Native languages?

Mr. HEATWOLE. Well, what we hope to do is secure funding to put in place programs by which the languages can be written down, recorded, documented, and ideally have systems put in place in the schools by which they encourage bilingual education.

We have determined that it is very, very important as far as Native cultures go, that the languages be preserved because language is such an important part of everyone's culture. And to see these languages being lost is just a tragedy.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Okay, so you see the role of the schools—the schools would have the primary role to preserve the Native languages.

Mr. **HEATWOLE**. Schools, among others. We were hoping to incorporate the entire community from the top down, be it with the community center, be it with the school, be it with just with some elders talking with the younger children. Right now, at this point, with some languages, it is just important to get the children to start speaking it again. In some cases, there are less than 50 people who even speak the language.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. I have heard in one instance in the Cordova area, Eyak, there are just two speakers left, and they have been around for the last 15 years.

Mr. **HEATWOLE**. Yes; that is correct, and the language is around as long as they are around. If it is not recorded, it is lost forever and that would be a tragedy.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. How much Federal money is being suggested in Senator Murkowski's bill?

Mr. **HEATWOLE** The legilation itself hasn't set a specific dollar figure. I know we are talking about a few million dollars to put this kind of a program to work and it is all a matter of convincing other Senators that this is something worth spending money on. And it is our position that this is indeed a very important issue to spend money on.

That is why I encourage people to call and air their views because this record is what other Senators will look at when they make some of these spending decisions.

Mr. **KENNEDY** What is the sense of Congress so far on this? I would imagine there is not opposition to people learning their own Native language, but there may be opposition to spending Federal money on it in the times in which we are trying to balance the Federal budget and we are having a nationwide recession, or at least we did have one.

Is this a question of making it a top priority in the minds of some Senators that don't even have Native Americans as constituents?

Mr. **HEATWOLE**. That is where we begin. There is a whole lot of questions you are asking there. We need to know, first of all, all people need to know what the big concern is and why this is such a big concern, and from there we can hopefully allocate little bits of money here and there to the appropriate agencies that could put something like this into place and that is what our legislation hopes to do.

We really haven't earmarked specific funds yet. That is what will happen throughout the rest of the hearing process here and it is our hope to get something accomplished before we break.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Okay. Is there time, if somebody's listening to this but not near a telephone, driving around someplace or maybe at some worksite and can't get to a telephone, is there time still available for them to send written testimony to Senator Murkowski?

Mr. **HEATWOLE**. You bet. I would encourage anyone who has that desire to do so. Just write to us here, Senator Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. And if you have anything to say on this issue and want to be included in the record, please write to us.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Thank you very much, Mike Heatwole from Senator Murkowski's office. Anything you would like to add?

Mr. **HEATWOLE**. No, Jeff; just that I hope everyone gets their views out here because we need them.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Thank you very much. From Washington, DC, Mike Heatwole, from Senator Frank Murkowski's office.

We go now to line 3, and Joan Hamilton is waiting.

CALLER: JOAN HAMILTON, BETHEL, AK

Ms. **HAMILTON**. Good morning.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. You might identify yourself if you want to testify.

Ms. **HAMILTON**. I am Joan Hamilton, calling in from Bethel. I was able to hear a little bit of Senator Murkowski's aide on this bill, and my understanding is that there is no money, or no dollar amount added to this bill. Is that correct?

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Well, he said that they have not come up with a dollar amount yet. They would anticipate spending a couple of million dollars.

Ms. **HAMILTON**. And their interest is where the concerns are?

Mr. **Kennedy**. Yes; that might be the role of people testifying to say how much the Federal Government ought to spend on this. That might be your role as a person to testify.

Ms. **Hamilton**. Well, I would have to think about it for a little while to be able to come up with a dollar amount.

But I am delighted that Senator Murkowski is putting this bill up for consideration of preserving the Native languages. I think we can all say it is about time, but there are a lot of us who remember not being able to speak English and then being able to only speak the Native language. Just a few years ago we were considered almost like a sub-species of the human race.

It is not as blatant today, but racism is still very much alive, institutionally and in the communities. A lot of people from the outside come here and they deny it and say that racism happened a long time ago, but that is just because they are blind and not able to see the subtle kinds of racist attitudes that happen.

I think what we need to keep in mind while we are talking about preservation of Native languages is that the United States is the only place that has a Government that recognizes that there are minorities and they do as a Nation try to acknowledge that minorities are in existence and there are programs like 638, self-determination types of programs that try to address inequities. So, with that I will go on.

Language to me is critical to how a person or a child views himself and those people around him or her. The Native language for years has been negated, as in the church, whatever church might be in the region, as well as by the educational system. The original education systems that were in existence out here, for instance, were Federally-funded, BIA.

And some of the church schools were Federally funded and they were the ones who were bastions of attacking anything that had to do with being Native.

I think bills like this came up because all of a sudden people are realizing that gross errors were made. Some of the gross errors are manifesting themselves in all kinds of social problems that we have.

As Alaska Natives, as a rule we have incredibly poor self-esteem and everybody recognizes it. But we acknowledge it, but some of the that cause that is because we as people and our languages were negated by the institutions that represented the outside world.

So, whatever can happen to validate the language, the importance of language, how people made a mistake in the past and now we are trying to do something about the mistake by putting money to preserve the language and there can be things like massive public service announcements on encouraging families, both in English and Y'upik, or for the other regions in their language, telling people the importance of teaching their children the language. Because that language itself, I think, validates the human being, their own culture.

About two days ago, I was watching a program done by a public radio station and I didn't realize how disappointed I was that the people were speaking in their Native language and then an English speaking person went over it. And it is appropriate that this program came on today. Because I was slightly insulted that instead of using English subtitles and having the Native language be spoken and heard, they covered up the Native language and translated into English.

I think little things like that do go a long way to impress upon our children and ourselves how critical is the use of the Native languages.

I wish I had prepared something better. I think I will for Senator Murkowski's office, but I think it is critical that we preserve the language.

Mr. **Kennedy**. Let's go to Barrow where we have Representative Eileen Maclean on the line. Good morning.

Ms. **Maclean**. Good morning, Jeff. How are you?

Mr. **Kennedy**. I'm pretty good. Would you like to speak as a representative or would you like to testify as well?

Caller: Eileen Maclean

Ms. **Maclean**. I would like to testify. I really appreciate the opportunity to testify this morning because they had some hearings during AFN and I wasn't able to attend that hearing.

But I applaud Senator Murkowski for introducing this legislation to preserve and protect the Alaska Native languages. I feel very strongly in favor of this legislation because it is going to help the Alaska Natives. It will help the school districts to teach the language and it will secure funding down the road for teaching of the language to our young people.

So I applaud Senator Murkowski for introducing this legislation and I appreciate this opportunity to speak about preserving and protecting our Alaska Native languages within Alaska. It will be historical if this legislation passes, it'll be very historical for us because it acknowledges our Alaska Native languages as vibrant and alive.

Mr. **Kennedy**. Thank you, from Representative Eileen Maclean of Barrow.

We go to Bethel once again. We have Don Fancher on the line. Good morning. Would you identify yourself and testify if you like?

CALLER: DONALD FANCHER, LOWER KUSKOKWIM

Mr. **Fancher**. Okay, thank you much. This is Donald Fancher, and I am on the Lower Kuskokwim School District, Board of Education and the Chairman, presently.

First of all, I am very thankful that Senator Murkowski has taken this initiative and we hope a lot for it. I have a couple of comments regarding the language preservation problems. I think first of all, everyone needs to realize that the schools are not going to be able to revive, to bring the languages back on their own. It is going to have to be in each home and the parents, the grandparents, the children, everyone involved is going to have to take the initiative to do what they can.

I would hope that this bill make language programs available to each home, i.e., daily TV programs. It is important if you are going to try teach it that you don't have just one word a week that people try to learn, but you are going to have to immerse people daily and perhaps make home videos and literature available to each and every home.

That is about the only way that we will be able to bring—especially the areas of the state that those languages are virtually dead—the little bit that we teach our kids in school is really not enough unless when they get home they find their parents trying to learn and they find everyone in the family is making an attempt to learn in the community.

Each and every family, of course, makes up the community. If the community is behind it, it is going to work. If you just leave it up to the schools, there is a very limited amount of what we can do.

Another problem that I have observed is many times these programs come down from the Federal level and yet the states don't give their support. Especially Indian education, within each state the Indian nation is an extreme minority, and thus they get that kind of response from their own kind of legislators.

I recall President Reagan, in trying to push the drunk driving laws and drug laws, that he had a lot of leverage when he told the states that "We are going to withhold your highway dollars if you don't comply." I don't know why we couldn't use this kind of leverage with our Indian education programs, that if a state won't comply, by helping and providing programs, that perhaps these dollars ought to be channeled directly to Indian tribes that have the get up and go to do it, or perhaps the school districts.

Those are just comments that I would hope are taken and perhaps used a little bit.

Mr. **Kennedy**. Are you suggesting that the state is not complying with the various Indian education funding bills and acts in the United States Congress, or is a question that the state is not matching funds well enough?

Mr. **Fancher**. I think it is probably a little bit of both. The states are a little bit resistant, especially nowadays. They are worried, perhaps, our state, they construe these types of programs to perhaps the movements that are going on and they water down a lot of what is going on.

I know with our school district, we have a lot of Federal dollars that, before they reach our school district, the state taps into it. Primarily, I don't think that they are buying into the program enough to make it effective.

Mr. **Kennedy**. Thank you very much, Don Fancher, from Bethel.

We have a call from Kotzebue. Would you like to identify yourself if you wish to testify?

CALLER: LORENA WILLIAMS, KOTZEBUE, AK

Ms. **Williams**. My name is Lorena Williams. I live in Kotzebue, and I would like to thank Senator Murkowski for listening to the people in regards to their Native languages and trying to get legislation passed.

I am a citizen here and I have been concerned for a long time about our Native languages. I have three teenagers who do not speak their own language, partly because their father was opposed to the school getting language back in the school. Because he didn't forget what happened way back there when he was going to school. He saw his buddies being punished for saying something in their own Native language and because this is what happened, my kids don't speak it.

I speak it, both of us do. But they haven't learned how to speak it themselves.

Going back to when I was going to school as a youngster, I used to see this problem of teachers putting plasters in the students' mouths and hitting them with rulers and letting them stand in corners. I was really young then, but I knew there was something wrong with the picture.

What is wrong with the picture? There must be something wrong with us because they are punishing us. We must be bad. That was the impression I got when I was really young.

But I have been able to forgive what has happened in the past and I think we have to do that. We have to forgive what happened way back there and I am glad there is something finally being done. Some of our legislators are listening to the Native people and trying to help us get our languages back and I appreciate it that very much.

Mr. **Kennedy**. Thank you, Lorena Williams from Kotzebue.

Let us go to line 3. I think we have George Seal on the line. Would you identify yourself for the purposes of testimony? Oh, we lost him.

Let us go to Barrow and say good morning. You are on Alaskan Voices Live. Would you like to identify yourself if you wish to testify?

Caller: Robert Suvlu, Barrow, AK

Mr. **Suvlu**. My name is Robert Suvlu. I am calling from Barrow. I am working for the school district as a Inupiat staff developer. I work with our Inupiat language teachers, district-wise and in Barrow.

I was just listening to your radio station, but I turned it on just a little bit late, but I was very much interested. I am very much interested. I am a certified teacher and taught the Inupiat language as a subject.

I would support the bill, if the language is going to be a part of instruction as a medium of instruction, not as a subject. I will take Barrow as an example.

Our children are not speaking the language. They are not understanding or speaking the language. There is a loss between our grandparents and our grandchildren in the situation of the language. We cannot understand each other. There is a communication gap.

What I am trying to say is, I was interested if there are going to be programs that would support the bill, like having materials development center which would provide instructional and testing materials or school education projects or education service centers of that kind of nature. Because our school cannot do it alone. Everybody in the village has got to support it, and the implication is that they must think and speak in their Native language. It has got to be both, everybody.

For example, the North Slope Borough, everybody speaks the language. It is perpetuated and maintained.

[Tape change, portion lost.]

Mr. **Suvlu**. [continuing]. It will not only be the school district, it has to be everybody, every organization, information to central organizations, and the employees. The employees have to be catalyst, but the schools themselves, or the organizations, have to serve as a [inaudible].

Mr. **Kennedy**. Let's go to Barrow once again. We have Patsy Aamodt. I hope I pronounced your name correctly. Would you identify yourself if you would like to testify?

Caller: Patsy Aamodt, Barrow, AK

Ms. **Aamodt**. Thank you. This is Patsy Aamodt, Superintendent of Schools for the North Slope Borough School District located in Barrow, AK.

First of all, I would like to commend Senator Murkowski for introducing S. 1595, it is a bill that has been long awaited by our people up here. I need for him to know there is a letter of support that has been mailed to him from our Board of Education supporting the bill.

Also, as superintendent, I met with our students from the North Slope located from all of our villages with regard to a resolution that was submitted by our students in Point Hope and it was revised by the help of Barrow students.

And the resolution that was introduced by the Arctic Folk students during the AFN convention had to do with the teaching of the Inupiat language to our students. When I met with them, when they were revising, making the revisions on the resolution before they presented it, it was a very emotional event for me and also

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for the students. Some of the information I want to share with you so that you know how important this bill is.

Our students have recorded—it is on video tape—that not knowing how to speak the language is a tremendous loss to them. It's as though they are no longer whole. They are not whole as people, because there is a part in them that is missing. That is being able to understand and being able to speak the Inupiat language.

They are unable to communicate with their elders and they feel left out when they hear their parents speak the language, they're laughing or something is happening and they are unable to understand what is being said. It's as though they have been ostracized from a family because they are unable to communicate.

When I met with them I tried to explain to them that our parents, including myself, did not mean to have that kind of pain being experienced by our students. For so long, the educational system has tried to convince parents that our children ought not to speak the Native language so that they can do well in school. The brainwashing done by the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been very successful in our region. So our parents have not taught the Inupiat language to their youngsters, thinking it would help our youngsters do better academically.

I am glad to say that our students are coming forward and telling us that that is very, very wrong and that they need to learn the language so that they can feel whole. And, I would just like to point out to you that the bill as it is introduced is a good one. When I look at the dollar amount that is introduced in the bill as $2,500,000 for each fiscal year 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, and 1996, I think it is a good start.

But if we are going to make an impact and reverse the brainwashing that was done by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, it is going to take more money than that. I would like to see the dollar amount increase because we plan on applying for the dollars to make this happen in our district. And if you have any questions, I would be more than happy to try and answer them.

Mr. Kennedy: All right, just one and I don't want to put words in your mouth, but you say suggests that possibly you believe that the Federal Government in a sense made an error in having a policy carried out in the Federal Government schools that Native people should not learn their language. Maybe you're suggesting, I don't know, that the money appropriated would in a sense undo the harm and it is something owed to Native people because of damage done to them.

And now this bill is not giving them something, but paying them back for that something is taken away from them.

Ms. AAMODT. I would be stronger in my words in stating that the reverse has to be done. The damage has to be reversed. I know that it cannot be corrected with the dollar amount that is identified at the last paragraph of the bill. There is so much emotional damage done as a result of the past policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that I would look at this as the first step in correcting a policy that has damaged a couple of generations of Inupiat people here in the North Slope and I am sure that it is true in other parts of the state.

Mr. KENNEDY. Okay, let's go to our next call. Good morning. You are on Alaskan Voices Live and if you would like to testify would you identify yourself, please?

CALLER: DORIS SMITH, GOLOVIN, AK

Ms. SMITH. My name is Doris Smith, and I'm in Golovin.

Mr.

Kennedy. Okay, what would you like to tell Senator Murkowski and the rest of the Congress?

Ms. SMITH. I would like to say that the Alaska Native language is part of who we are, and it is very beautiful to hear and understand. I can't understand what most of the elders say as they speak, but I could only respond to them in English. Because I remember being physically disciplined for speaking Eskimo in elementary school.

We need to have our Native language preserved and strengthened. I know that this is a very positive move for Alaska.

Mr. KENNEDY. Okay, thank you. How do I say thank you for the Golovin area?

Ms. SMITH. We say "kuyunikpuk."

Mr. KENNEDY. Just like in Barrow. Okay, kuyunikpuk, Doris. Thanks very much for calling.

Once again our telephone line should be open in a few seconds. It's 1-800-478-3654, and if you live in Bethel, you could call us on our regular number, 543-3131. The program is Alaskan Voices Live. We are originating from Bethel where you can call.

We do have a call. Good morning.

Caller: Etta Koryok, Barrow, AK

Ms. Koryok. Good morning. I'm calling from Barrow. I'm a resident. My name is Etta Koryok. I'm for the bill and I'm glad they are finally doing this.

Mr. Kennedy. Are you still there? Okay, we might hang up the number and try again. We had a little telephone glitch as they say. So, if that person is calling, you can call back.

And for those of you who are not so familiar with the program, here in Bethel we have a seven second delay, so if you start listening to your radio, you're going to get completely confused. Let's try it again.

Good morning, you're on Alaska Native Voices Live. If you would like to testify, please identify yourself.

Caller: Matthew Iya, Nome, AK

Mr. Iya. Good morning. My name is Matthew Iya and I'm calling from Nome, AK.

Mr. Kennedy. Good morning, Matthew.

Mr. Iya. Good morning. I think the bill is very good. I am glad to see it and it is going to revitalize and maintain our languages in Alaska. But I think it should go further beyond that and we know we want our children to be learning the languages. Without learning the languages part of the culture will not be made aware of, or some of the customs and traditions that only with our language can they be made aware of and have some understanding.

But I think they should go beyond that. For those adults who want to revive and speak their languages have some kind of clause in there for adult education. I know we have a lot of campuses throughout Alaska and I know that we have LIOs in some of the villages. But they should have something for the adults who want to learn the language as well.

Mr. Kennedy. You believe the role of the Federal Government should be to help fund such adult education centers?

Mr. Iya. Yes; definitely to fund adult education. Because we want our children to know. But there is a lot other adults out there that have been denied speaking their language in the era when we were being educated back there by the missionaries and the Government, that we really need to reach out for those adults who legitimately want to learn their language.

Mr. Kennedy. Thank you very much.

We have another caller on the line.

Caller: Dorothy Aloyicious

Ms. Aloyicious. Good morning. My real name is Jaconick. My Gashuk name is Dorothy Aloyicious. I would like to testify to tell you how important our Native language is. And once again, if we want to revive our Native language, any Native language we have, we need to get our answers from our elders. They know our Native language so well that they have passed it on for generations to generations, centuries after centuries for thousands of years.

Just because we have had our hurts in the past doesn't mean that we cannot go forward. And it is good to hear that something is being done about this. But we need to look at our elders. They have the answers. If it is the Inupiat region or the Athabascan region, our elders have the answers. And each community has that great resource.

Mr. Kennedy. Thank you also for sharing with us your Y'upik name.

Let's go once again. We have another caller on the line. Good morning, please identify yourself if you would like to testify.

Caller: Linda Gologergin, Nome, AK

Ms. Gologergin. Good morning. My name is Linda Gologergin and I am calling your from Nome. I speak Siberian Y'upik and I teach Siberian Y'upik in the Nome school district. I have been teaching for the past seven years and I think that it is really good that Senator Murkowski is introducing something that has been forgotten by our legislature.

I think it is very important that we teach our Eskimo languages in the schools because the kids that are coming to our schools that speak a language other than English, they immediately know that when I am speaking their language they feel comfortable.

We need to retain our languages by teaching it. And it is really important that we teach our languages as much as the foreign languages that are offered in the schools. I know that we are really fortunate on St. Lawrence Island that our young people still speak the language. But some of them are losing it and we need to provide that opportunity to contain their self-identity and their culture.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Thank you. How do I say thank you in Siberian Y'upik?

Ms. **GOLOGERGIN**. Eyumsekakahalik.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Wow—Eyumsekakahalik?

Ms. **GOLOGERGIN**. That's right.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. I don't know if I will ever remember that.

We have about 12 minutes left, 1-800-478-3654 if you live outside of Bethel. And we have another caller on the line. Please identify yourself if you would like to testify. We may have lost that caller.

Peter Twitchell is working his fingers to the bone here keeping track of the telephone calls. Once again, we have an Alaskan Voices live caller on the line.

CALLER: JOE DEXTER, GOLOVIN, AK

Mr. **DEXTER**. My name is Joe Dexter and I'm in Golovin. I vote yes for this and I urge Senator Murkowski to vote yes or push it as hard as he can. And I hope that he doesn't—since it is not being funded—take funding out of other areas that Natives have worked and strived so hard to advance themselves.

I think he would understand what I mean by this. That is all I have to say.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Let's go once again. I have a caller on the line.

CALLER: UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER

SPEAKER. I don't want to identify myself. I just want to say that if the elders know the language, the younger generation should go to the elders to learn. I don't think that schools should be really involved in teaching it because the elders could teach it better.

The Y'upik language is only really practical in Alaska and it is not really practical any place else. That is all I wanted to say.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Okay, it is sort of a dissenting voice here. Thank you.

We have a caller on the line. Let's go to the caller.

CALLER: CINDY PILOT, KOYUKUK, AK

Ms. **PILOT**. My name is Cindy Pilot. I'm calling from Koyukuk. I would like to support the Alaska Native language bill. The Koyukuk Village Council passed a resolution and submitted to Tanana Chiefs, Resolution 91-71, requiring that they make Alaska Native language a requirement in school.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Okay, is there anything else you would like to say?

Ms. **PILOT**. No; that's it.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. Okay. Thank you very much for calling from Koyukuk. We don't get too many calls from Athabascan country. I guess that's the folks listening to us on KIYU in Galena. I'm glad to see that we are transmitting to some of our friends in Interior Alaska.

We have another caller on the line.

CALLER: OSCAR ALEXI, BETHEL, AK

Mr. **ALEXI**. My name is Oscar Alexi. I'm calling for the staff at the Y'upik language center in Bethel. What we would like to say is that we appreciate and we support the bill introduced by Senator Murkowski.

There are a couple of things that I thought I would bring up. One, most important I felt, is that a language ties cultures together. There are many terms in a language that are used to express feelings. Lots of such terms in a language may lead to violence and crimes, suicide and all that.

I saw that something like that has been happening in our area where we end up with a lot of violence and suicides, and that is because of a loss of language, of not being able to communicate in one's language.

Before I start going too far, I think maybe I'll stop here, but I really appreciate what you are all doing.

Mr. **KENNEDY**. We have about eight minutes left in our program. Thanks for your patience if you are trying to get through to us. We have a caller on the line.

CALLER: LILLIAN MICHAEL, KWETHLUK, AK

Ms. **MICHAEL**. Good morning, Jeff. This is Lillian Michael from Kwethluk. My Y'upik name is [name given in native tongue]. I'm calling in support of this legislation. It is about time someone put it on record to try and save our Native language.

I am in support of what Dorothy Aloyicious was saying in regard to getting help from our elders for help with the Y'upik language.

But I do believe—and I have said this before—I think it is important for the school children to get involved. Because what we learn in later years is what we learn at home. I know the importance of bilingual teaching because I taught it before. I was interested in learning the Y'upik language all the way from high school.

I would recommend that the people that have radio stations get their students involved, get them on the air, give them something to get excited about in regards to speaking bilingually, especially for those that have bilingual teachings in their schools.

And for those that have radio and TV, like KYUK's too, we should get students on the air to do their little Y'upik school news stuff, too. I believe that that is kind of important because children are the foundation of what a certain village is to become later on. Because they are the future leaders in villages and our towns.

That's about all I wanted to say. I support this legislation and it is about time someone put it in writing.

I would also recommend that you go on a little bit longer because if this is going statewide, I'm sure that there are a lot more who want to testify.

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, the other stations all shut down. They have their own requirements and we can't interfere with that. But if people do want to testify, they can send written testimony to Senator Murkowski.

Ms. MICHAEL. Yes; I think that would be good, along with this radio program which I'm really thankful for today. I think this radio program along with some written support for this legislation to pass would make it a little stronger.

Mr. KENNEDY. Okay, thank you.

We go to another caller on the line.

CALLER: GLORIA SIMEN

Ms. SIMEN. Jeff, this is Gloria Simen representing AVCP. I am in support of Senator Murkowski's bill on the preservation of the Alaska Native languages.

I'm one of the poor Natives that hasn't been able to learn my own language and I do believe that there is a vast knowledge of our culture and traditions that is not being passed on to us right now because we don't all speak the language.

And it is very important that our language be preserved and available for anyone and everyone who wants to learn. And I thank you.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you.

We have about 4 minutes left. We have a caller on the line.

CALLER: FLORENCE AMAWA, WAINWRIGHT, AK

Ms. AMAWA. My name is Florence Amawa from Wainwright, AK. I've been listening to your radio program this morning, and it is very interesting.

All my grandchildren are slacking away from the language all over the state. I'm involved in education and other programs. Senator Murkowski, all we need is more money. [Native language]. I am a fluent Inupiat language speaker. My children also speak fluent Inupiat language and the ones that are slacking away now are our grandchildren. Although some hang on to it, but it is hard.

We need help. And I'm so glad to hear this kind of radio program this morning.

Mr. KENNEDY. Okay. Thank you. Thanks to everybody who has called. We wish we could get more people on the line. Wish we had more toll free telephone numbers.

If you didn't get through to us and you want to testify, please send your written comments to Senator Murkowski's office; 20510 is the ZIP Code for Washington, DC. And thanks to everybody who has called from all over rural Alaska, from Koyukuk to St. Lawrence Island, I believe.

Thanks very much for joining us and we will continue from Alaskan Voices Live next week. Bye now.

[Whereupon, the call-in session was concluded.]

7-LS0287\D

HOUSE BILL NO. 352

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES LINCOLN, Ellis, B.Davis

Introduced: 5/21/91
Referred: Health, Education & Social Services, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

"An Act relating to a curriculum for Native language education; and providing for an effective date."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

*** Section 1.** AS 14.03.120(e) is amended to read:

(e) A district shall, by October 31 of each year, provide to the state board, and make available to the public, a report on the performance of each public school and public school students in the district. The report must be entitled "School District Report Card To The Public" and must be prepared on a form prescribed by the department. The report must include

(1) the percent of district students in the top and bottom quarter of standardized national achievement examinations; results under this paragraph shall be disclosed in a manner that does not reveal the individual identities of students;

(2) the percent of students who are not promoted to the next grade;

(3) student, parent, and community member comments on the school's performance;

(4) the annual percent change in enrollment and the percent of enrollment change due to student transfers into and out of the district;

(5) attendance, retention, and graduation rates;

(6) the ways in which meaningful parent involvement in school performance was achieved;

(7) **if provided, a summary and evaluation of the Native language education curriculum described in AS 14.30.420;**

(8) other indicators of school performance required by the state board; and

(9) [(8)] other indicators of school performance selected by the district.

*** Sec. 2.** AS 14.30 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 14.30.420. NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION. The school board of a regional educational attendance area shall, and the school board of a municipal school district may, initiate and conduct a program of Native language education for grades K through 12. The program must include Native languages traditionally spoken in the school district. Each school board conducting a program of Native language education shall implement the program as a part of regular classroom studies and to the extent possible shall utilize

(1) instructors who have knowledge and adequate training in teaching the Native language of the community in which the school is located; and

(2) instructors and instructional materials available through the University of Alaska Native Language Center.

*** Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 1992.

Statement of Professor Michael Krauss, Director, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Senator Murkowski, fellow Alaskans –

I speak out here to urge support for S.1595, to provide for the future of the very essence of Alaska's cultural heritage. Our languages represent our intellectual wealth, our very store of ideas – each language its own. Lovingly cultivated and handed down by our ancestors, the tie that binds our minds to theirs, and to each other – if we lose these, we lose our past. What will be our future?

I personally have been a student of Alaska Native languages for 30 years at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and have been the Director of its Alaska Native Language Center since its establishment there in 1972, the same year as Bilingual Education became legal in Alaska. (As an academic activist I am also currently Chair of the Linguistic Society of America's newly formed committee on endangered languages, and President of SSILA, the society of linguists who study Native American languages, and pledge their support as well.)

For thirty years now not only as an academic but also as a fellow citizen, I have protested the neglect and suppression of Alaska's Native languages in the schools which has brought them to the crisis that everyone now can see. Instead of teaching English as a second language to supplement Alaska Native languages, not to replace them, the tragic result we are now faced with is the impending very extinction of Alaska's Native languages. I have long warned that as parents speak English instead of their Native language to their children, the language will die with them. By now only Central Yupik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik are spoken by children. Eighteen of Alaska's 20 Native languages will die during the coming century that is nearly upon us – at the rate things are going. In some cases, for example the Tanana Athabaskan language at Minto and Nenana, the youngest speakers are about my age. How long then before that language becomes extinct? – 35 years? – 2025 (give or take ten).

The worst thing about this tragedy is that it was totally unnecessary. Alaska Native languages could have been supplemented instead of replaced by English. In the case of Central Yupik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik we still have that chance. In the case of the rest the tragedy may still be unnecessary, or at least partly avoidable. One thing we know we can and must do is to document these languages, to make as full as possible a record of them, on tape, and with good dictionaries, grammars, and collections of the traditional oral literature and history of the people – preserved for all time. (All Alaska Native languages are now written, with excellent writing systems.) This documentation is essential and – with adequate suppport – feasible. The

Alaska Native Language Center pledges its continued support and leadership in this field. Except for teaching a few of these languages on campus, especially Central Yupik and Inupiaq, in education and school programs we can only help with the development and publication of some of the materials needed, and with the training of some of the speakers of these languages to teach the languages in the villages. We stand ready to continue and to increase our services to the state as best we can, and to work with the community efforts that develop as a reasult of Senate Bill 1595.

Jenny Langan
P. O. Box 3354
Kodiak, AK 99615

To whom it may concern,

I write in complete support of this bill. I believe that language is the life of the people, and that each language describes its associated culture in ways that cannot be translated. If the languages of Alaska die, so do the nations; the people will still be there, but their own culture will be lost to them, available only as a pale copy in a foreign tongue. Living cultures bear within themselves unique ideas and ways of looking at the world. Someday soon the ideas of the Gwich'in of the interior Arctic or the Alutiiq people of my own home islands may be vitally important to us in ways we cannot now imagine. We live in the North now because the people who were already here taught the first Western explorers ways of survival of which no one else had knowledge. Now we wear parkas and mukluks and have learned to burrow into the snow when we are lost in winter. Something so ordinary that nobody even notices it, something equally unique to the North, may save as many lives as the sewing of Inupiaq women did once. But if it is no longer there, we will not have four thousand years to recreate it. Problems are generally less patient with the people they afflict.

Besides the practical there always stands the moral. We applaud freedom of speech; yet our ancestors, who held up the same principle, denied speech to millions of people except on their terms. Shall we continue this injustice? Are the elegant and ancient languages of the first peoples of this land simply too complicated for our intelligence? Or are bigotry and complacency stronger reasons? Whether we like it or not, our ancestors left us with the wreckage of their mistakes. If we do not move to repair them now, we may as well be espousing the arrogant and parochial doctrines that justified their making. Please, begin now. Begin with Alaska, and keep going. Help my neighbors reclaim their own lives. Do not leave them to fight alone against two hundred years of inertia. Give them back their voices.

Respectfully,

J. Langan

Lower
Kuskokwim
School
District

Curriculum/Bilingual Department
P.O. Box 305 * Bethel, Alaska 99559
907-543-4850

October 23, 1991

Honorable Frank Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

In response to our conversation which we had during the Congressional Hearing for Senate Bill 1595, a bill that seeks "To perserve and enhance the ability of Alaska natives to speak and understand their native languages." I am sending you copies of some of our Bilingual materials and a price list of our other Bilingual materials.

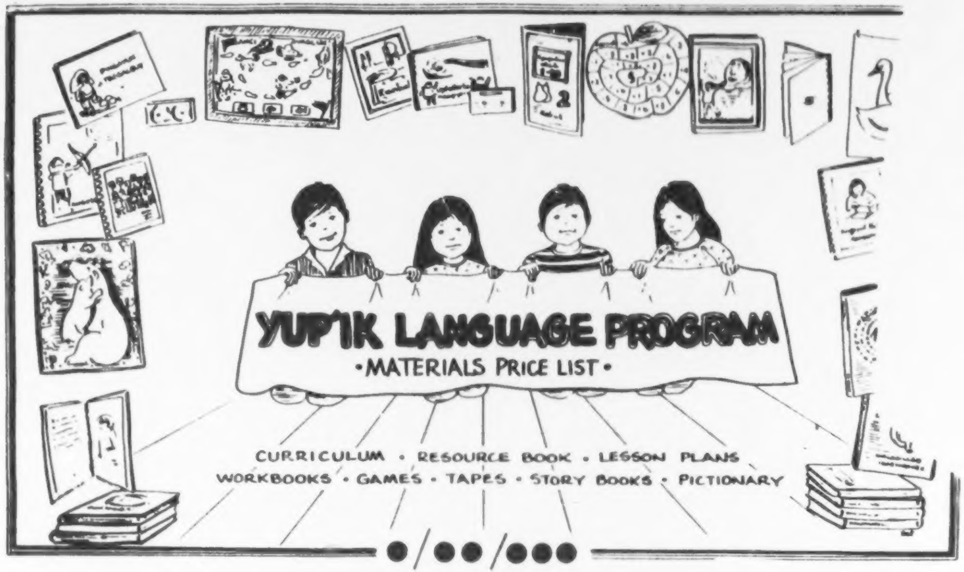
Also enclosed is a complimentary copy of our 1992 Calendar entitled, Uitalartua Kusquqviim Avatiini (I live on the Kuskokwim) This calendar depicts life on the Kuskokwim River through the use of photographs and lines of poetry shared with us by participants of the 1991 Writing Institutes held in Bethel last summer. Hope you enjoy.

Should you need any technical assistance regarding Yup'ik language issues, educational information about limited English proficiency and teacher aide training, feel free to contact Director Phyllis Williams. Our department is more than willing to assist.

Quyana. Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Daisy May Lamont



YUP'IK LANGUAGE PROGRAM

•MATERIALS PRICE LIST•

CURRICULUM • RESOURCE BOOK • LESSON PLANS
WORKBOOKS • GAMES • TAPES • STORY BOOKS • PICTIONARY

Lower
Kuskokwim
School
District

YUP'IK LANGUAGE PROGRAM MATERIALS

YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
	Report Cards		K-3	Card	$0.50	$0.60
Mingugarkat (P.U.P.S.)	Coloring Book	Preschool		Work Book	$15.00	$18.75
	Paper Dolls	Art	1-3	Cutouts	$0.50	$0.60
Caarkat	Things to do	Assort.		Teacher Book		
Caarkat	Things to do	Assort.		Work Book		
	English is Fun	E.S.L.	K	Teacher	$5.00	$6.25
	Learning English at Play (LEAP)	E.S.L.	K-3	Book	$5.00	$6.25
	Target	E.S.L.	1-3	Teacher's Book		
	Parental Inv.	Ideas	1-3	Book	$10.00	$12.50
	Five Stories, Eight Rhymes	L.A.	1-3	Book		
	Story Time Plus	L.A.	K-3	Teacher's Hand Book	$2.00	$2.50
	Yup'ik Alphabet Cards	L.A.	K-3	Cards	$5.00	$6.25
Akiugnerit Ciuliamta	Echos from the Past	L.A.	3-6	Book	$20.00	$25.00
Anglanilleq Igaryaramek	Alphabet Book	L.A.	1	Book	$20.00	$25.00
Dictionary (Yup/Eng by B.I.A.)	Dictionary	L.A.	Adult	Teacher's Book	$5.00	$6.25
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L.A.	1	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

YUP'IK LANGUAGE PROGRAM MATERIALS

SEPTEMBER 1989

YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	2	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	3	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	4	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	5	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	6	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	7	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	8	Book (YSL)	$10.00	$12.50
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	9-10	2 Book Set (YSL)	$15.00	$18.75
	Dev. Yup'ik Lang. Program	L A	11-12	2 Book Set (YSL)	$15.00	$18.75
	Microrecord Learning Units w/ Plyr	L A	4-12	Complete Set (YSL)	$120.00	$120.00
	Microrecord Learning Unit	L A	4-12	Book (YSL)	$5.00	$6.25
	Microphonograph			Microrecord Player	$10.00	$12.50
	Central Yup'ik Language Kit	L A	4-12	Multi Media Supp	$25.00	$31.25
	Central Yup'ik	L A	4-12	Student Manual	$5.00	$6.25
Kumluc'kaq (Play)	Thumbelina	L A	K-3	Play	$6.00	$7.50
Kumluc'kaq (Story)	Thumbelina	L A	3	Book	$6.00	$7.50

YUP'IK LANGUAGE PROGRAM MATERIALS

SEPTEMBER 1989

YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
Qalarcaraliuryaraq Kalikaliurcuun	Yup'ik Language Worksheets	L A.	2a	Quarterly Workbook	$5.00	$6.25
Qalarcaraliuryaraq Kalikaliurcuun	Yup'ik Language Worksheets	L A	2b	Quarterly Workbook	$5.00	$6.25
Qalarcaraliuryaraq Kalikaliurcuun	Yup'ik Language Worksheets	L A	2c	Quarterly Workbook	$5.00	$6.25
Qalarcaraliuryaraq Kalikaliurcuun	Yup'ik Language Worksheets	L A	3b	Quarterly Workbook	$5.00	$6.25
Qalarcaraliuryaraq Kalikaliurcuun	Yup'ik Language Worksheets	L A	3c	Quarterly Workbook	$5.00	$6.25
Qaneryarat Pilinguat	Pictionary	L A	2	Book/Posters	$20.00	$25.00
Qanqacuaqautet Unatelgun-llu Carkaituryarat	Finger Plays/Poems	L A	K-3	Book	$5.00	$6.25
Quirat Ellarpim Iluanek	Stories From Around the World	L A	3-6	Book	$15.00	$18.75
	Writing Language Experience	L A		Teacher Idea Book	$1.00	$1.25
Elitua	I'm Learning	L A	1a	1st Quarter Book	$8.00	$10.00
Elitua	I'm Learning	L A	1b	2nd Quarter Book	$8.00	$10.00
Elitua	I'm Learning	L A	1c	3rd Quarter Book	$8.00	$10.00
Atua	Sing	Music	K-3	Book	$3.00	$3.75
Qaneryarat Nepait	Beginning Sounds	Phonics	1	Work Book	$6.00	$7.50
Qaneryarat Nepait	Beginning Sounds	Phonics	2	Work Book	$6.00	$7.50
Igat Aperyarat-llu	Letters & Words	Phonics/Spelling	1	3rd Quarter Book	$2.00	$2.50

YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
	My Cursive Writing Book	Writing	3	Work Book	$5.00	$6.25
	Cursive Writing	Writing	3	Teacher's Edition	$3.00	$3.75
	Reading Profile Card	Reading	K-3	Checklist Card	$1.00	$1.25
	Yup'ik Reading Card	Reading	K-3	Reading Selections	$1.00	$1.25
Caarkaipaa	I Have Nothing To Do	Reading	1	Easy Reader	$5.00	$6.25
Cup'am Qimugtai	Cup'aq's Dogs	Reading	3	Easy Reader	$7.50	$9.25
Quarruuk	The Needle Fish	Reading	3	Easy Reader	$5.00	$6.25
Akaguagaankaaq	Giant Story	Reading	All	Easy Reader	$15.00	$18.75
Alaska-m Ungungssii Angelrit	Alaskan Big Game Mammals	Reading	K-3	Easy Reader	$5.00	$6.25
Naninguq-Takelira-llu	Long and Short Things	Reading	K-3	Easy Reader	$2.00	$2.50
Taqukam Pamyuirtellra	How the Bear Lost his Tail	Reading	1-3	Easy Reader	$5.00	$6.25
Assiitqapiaraina Erneq	The Very Bad Day	Reading	1-2	Easy Reader	$15.00	$18.75
Ciuqliit Kalikat Naaqerkanka	My First Reader	Reading	1	Book	$10.00	$12.50
Tungliit Kalikat Naaqerkanka	Second Grade Reader	Reading	2	Book	$10.00	$12.50
Pingayuat Kalikat Naaqerkanka	Third Gd. Reader	Reading	3	Book	$10.00	$12.50
Yugnikek'ngat Nutarat	New Friends	Reading	1	1st Pre-Primer	$15.00	$18.75

YUP'IK LANGUAGE PROGRAM MATERIALS

SEPTEMBER 1989

YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
Yugnikek'ngat Yuilqumek	Friends from the Wilderness	Reading	1	2nd Pre-Primer	$15.00	$18.75
Ciutmun Ayagtukut	We are going forward	Reading	1	3rd Pre-Primer	$15.00	$18.75
Cukanukut	We are going faster	Reading	1	4th Pre-Primer	$15.00	$18.75
Nutarat Naaqerkat	New Readers	Reading	1	Primer Book	$20.00	$25.00
Cali Allat Naaqerkat	Yup'ik Reading Series	Reading	Level 1	Basal Reader	$25.00	$31.25
Cali Allat Naaqerkat	Yup'ik Reading Series	Reading	Level 1	Teacher's Manual	$15.00	$18.75
Cali Allat Naaqerkat	Yup'ik Reading Series	Reading	Level 2	Basal Reader	$25.00	$31.25
Ikseng'aqellriik/Pingayuat Naaqerkanka	Woman on the other side	Reading	1	Work Book	$5.00	$6.25
Ikseng'aqellriik/Pingayuat Naaqerkanka	Woman on the other side	Reading		Teacher Guide Book	$10.00	$12.50
Naaqiyugngaunga	I Can read	Reading	2	Book	$7.50	$9.25
Naaqiyugngaunga	I Can Read	Reading	2	Work Book	$4.00	$5.00
Naaqiyugngaunga Cali	I Can Read Too	Reading	2	Book	$7.50	$9.25
Uptellerkaq Naaqiyaramun	Getting Ready to Read	Reading	1	Work Book	$6.00	$7.50
Uptellerkaq Naaqiyaramun	Getting Ready to Read	Reading	1	Teacher's Book	$6.00	$7.50
Yugtun Elitnauristet Qanemciit	Personal Stories of Yup'ik Teachers	Reading		Book	$3.00	$3.75
Yuut Qanemciit	Yup'ik Lore	Reading	7-12	Book	$12.95	$12.95

YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
Aveingaam Igiii	Mouse House	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Aiimategka	Where are my mittens	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Cingssiik	The Elf	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Yugnikek'ngaq Neqlilierni	Friend at Fishcamp	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
	Peanut butter Playdough	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Elitnaurluk	Let's Go to School	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Enemni	My House	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Evegtat Eniit	Beehive	Reading Enrich.	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Ikayuu	Help	Reading Enrich.	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Kipusvigguk	Let's Go to the Store	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Pissurta, Pissurta, Camek Tangercit?	Hunter, Hunter, What do you see?	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Pissurtek	The Two Hunters	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Piyullrenka	I wish I had	Reading Enrich.	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Qavamek Kalikat	Book about Sleep	Reading Enrich.	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Temengqertua	I have a Body	Reading Enrich.	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Tut'aq Taqukarpak	Bart the Bear	Reading Enrich.	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25

YUP'IK LANGUAGE PROGRAM MATERIALS

YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
Wangnek Akluyugngaunga	I Can Dress Myself	Reading Enrich	1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Waten-qaa Piyugngauten?	Can You Do This?	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Yaassiiget	Boxes	Reading Enrich	K-1	Take Home Book	$1.00	$1.25
Wangnek Tamalkurma	All About Me	Reading Readiness	1	Work Book	$5.00	$6.25
Ilat Yugnikek'ngat-llu	Family and Friends	Reading Supp	1	Book	$10.00	$12.50
Talliman Qanemcicuaraat	Five Stories	Reading Supp	1	Book	$10.00	$12.50
Angussaagta	The Provider	S.S.	1-3	Teacher's Book		
Angussaagta	The Provider	S.S.	1-3	Book		
Kass'alugpiat Alussis	Russian Orthodox Christmas	S.S.	1-3	Book	$2.00	$2.50
Qaaritaaryaraq	Halloween	S.S.	2	Book	$5.00	$6.25
Suulutaarculallret	The Gold Seeker	S.S.	2-3	Book	$1.00	$1.25
Yuut Ikayurtaagutellrit	People Helping People	S.S.	2-3	Book	$10.00	$12.50
Alungutet, Alungutet	Tongues, etc.	Sci.	1-2	Book		
Ayuqenrilnguut Atsat	Berry Book	Sci.	1-3	Book		
Cat Unguvalriit	All Living Things	Sci.	2	Book	$3.00	$3.75
Ellamta Ayuqucia	Seasons	Sci.	1-3	Book	$10.00	$12.50

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YUP'IK TITLE	ENGLISH TITLE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
Ellakurtenguyulria	Weatherman	Sci	2-3	Book	$2.00	$2.50
Nallutalinguq Negaiq	The Smart Spider	Sci	1-2	Book	$5.00	$6.25
Nunanguat Globe-at-llu	Maps & Globes	Sci	2	Work Book	$2.00	$2.50
	Library Corner	Library Ideas	K-3	Handbook	$2.00	$2.50
	Learning Centers	Teaching Ideas	K-3	Resource Book	$2.00	$2.50

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
Teacher's Guide to Level 1	Book (Morrow & Hensel)	$25.00	$31.25
Inua (Hardbound)	Book (Fitzhugh & Kaplan)	$16.20	
Inua (Softbound)	Book (Fitzhugh & Kaplan)	$8.10	
Yup'ik Esk. Orthography	Book (Miyaoka & Mather)	$10.50	
Yup'ik Esk. Orthography	Answer Keys	$2.50	
Exodus	Book (Uns In Greenlandic)	$6.25	
Nutarak	Book (Hendrick)	$5.75	
Kallalit Nunaata Oqaluttuansaanera	Book (Lidegnard & Staermose)	$4.00	
Urdiulerup Akisungara	Book (Houston)	$6.00	
Alaska Native Languages: Past, Present, and Future	Book (Krauss)	$5.00	
Cauyamariuq (It's Time for Drumming)	Book (Mather)	$16.00	$20.00
Eskimo About Bering Strait	Book (Nelson)	$22.00	
Flora of Alaska and Neighboring Territories	Book (Eric Hulten)	$65.00	
Neunat Neginaqtuat " Plants That We Eat	Book (Jones: Kotzebue)	$14.00	
Wild Edible & Poisonous Plants of Alaska	Book (Coop. Ext. Service: UAF)	$2.75	
The Alaska - Yukon Wild Flowers Guide	Book (Alaska Mag. Publishing)	$9.95	
Plant Unit Film Strips	Film Strip of YK Delta Plants	$14.00	$17.50
Fam	Cassette Tape (In Greenlandic)	$7.75	
Erngaa (Rasmus Lyberth)	Cassette Tape (In Greenlandic)	$6.50	
Sinnattoraagama Takusarpagit (Ulo)	Cassette Tape (In Greenlandic)	$7.75	

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	LKSD $	NON LKSD $
Qengaina	Cassette Tape (In Yup'ik)	$4.00	$5.00
Minstrel On Ice (Charlie Adams)	LP Record (In Greenlandic)	$6.50	
My Seasons (Charlie Panagoniak)	LP Record (In Greenlandic)	$6.50	
USGS Map for specific village areas. Sizes below.			
1:62,500, 40 to 60 necessary	Map	$1.00	
1:200,000, 10 to 40 necessary	Map	$1.75	
Native Peoples and Languages of Alaska	Map	$7.00	
Inua	Reprint Photos from Book	$30.00	
Pitengnaqsaraq	Subsistence Game Board	$35.00	50.00
Ilat	Kinship Game	$7.00	$8.75
Lotta Game	Game for Ceremonies Unit	$5.00	$6.25
Tegganrurtellerkaq Elpenun Atauq ", "Become an Elder"	Alcohol Awareness Board Game	15.00	$18.75
Slate for Tool Making Unit	1 sq ft slate pieces	$5.50	

TESTIMONY OF JOHN ACTIVE

ASSISTANT YUP'IK NEWS DIRECTOR
KYUK-AM/TV POUCH 468
BETHEL, ALASKA 99559
TEL: (907) 543-3131
FAX : (907) 543-3130

PAGE 1 OF 5

HONORABLE SENATOR MURKOWSKI, MEMBERS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE, I WAS SO HAPPY WHEN I LEARNED ABOUT THE "ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGES PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT." I JUST HAD TO BE A PARTICIPANT OF THIS HISTORIC EVENT.

I AM SO, SO VERY PROUD THAT I AM YUP'IK AS IT HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF TWO LANGUAGES WHICH CONTINUES TO BE SPOKEN BY ALASKA NATIVE CHILDREN -- THE OTHER BEING SIBERIAN YUP'IK. OH, WE ARE SO VERY PROUD.

I AM NOT ONLY PROUD OF THE CHILDREN WHO CAN SPEAK BUT ALSO OF MY ELDERS WHO PERSISTED IN SPEAKING. ALTHOUGH WHEN THEY WERE ATTENDING SCHOOL, THEY WERE OFTEN PUNISHED FOR SPEAKING YUP'IK.

THEIR PUNISHMENT WAS UNTHINKABLE WASHING THE MOUTH OUT WITH SOAP OR SLAPPING THE HAND WITH A RULER. THIS IS A TRADITIONAL PUNISHMENT AMOUNG YOUR PEOPLE BUT IT MUST HAVE BEEN A MOST HEART-BREAKING EXPERIENCE FOR MY PEOPLE.

SOME MORE:

WE AS A GROUP OF ALASKAN NATIVES ARE VERY LUCKY, THAT WE HAVEN'T AQUIRED A TASTE FOR SOAP OR EVOLVED INTO PEOPLE WITH RULER MARKINGS ON OUR PALM.

MY PEOPLE SUFFERED MUCH AND ALTHOUGH THEY CAN SPEAK YUP'IK TODAY -- MANY, MANY OF THEIR WORDS ARE NO LONGER USED. WE YOUNG PEOPLE HEAR THE ELDERS USE THEM -- AND WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY MEAN. IT MAKES ME SAD WHEN I HEAR WORDS, I DON'T UNDERSTAND AND IT MAKES MY ELDERS MAD WHEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE TRYING TO SAY TO ME.

I WAS RAISED BY MY GRANDMOTHER, AND SHE TOLD ME BED-TIME STORIES IN THE YUP'IK LANGUAGE ALONG WITH THEIR CORRESPONDING SONGS.

I WENT TO SCHOOL AND LEARNED ENGLISH BUT WHEN I RETURNED HOME YUP'IK WAS ALWAYS SPOKEN. I LEARNED TO SPEAK, PRAY AND SING IN YUP'IK AND TODAY I CAN TRANSLATE INTO YUP'IK WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY READING SILENTLY IN ENGLISH. MANY OTHERS CAN AND WE'RE PROUD TO BE ABLE TO.

SOME MORE:

PAGE 3 OF 5

TODAY, YUP'IK IS BEING TAUGHT IN OUR AREA ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS. INCLUDING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN MY TOWN, BY SOME OF THE VERY SAME PEOPLE WHO HAD THEIR PALMS SLAPPED AND MOUTHS WASHED OUT WITH SOAP. IT'S PEOPLE LIKE THESE WHO TURN OUT TO BE THE MOST PROFICIENT EDUCATORS IN THE FIELD OF TEACHING THE YUP'IK LANGUAGE -- BECAUSE THEIR OWN TEACHERS TRIED SO HARD TO KEEP THEM FROM SPEAKING IT.

TODAY, ON THE YUKON/KUSKOKWIM DELTAS YOU'LL FIND CHURCH SERVICES BEING CONDUCTED IN THE YUP'IK LANGUAGE.

HYMNS AND THE NEW TESTEMENT HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO YUP'IK AND THE OLD TESTEMENT IS BEING TRANSLATED INTO MY LANGUAGE AS WE MEET HERE TODAY.

I WORK FOR THE PUBLIC RADIO AND TELEVISION STATION - KYUK, IN BETHEL, ALASKA. I WORK IN THE YUP'IK NEWS DEPARTMENT. I LOVE WHAT I DO FOR MY PEOPLE.

KYUK RADIO AND TELEVISION HAS NOW BEEN ON THE AIR FOR TWENTY YEARS. OUR STATION IS ON THE AIR FOR EIGHTEEN HOURS A DAY AND APPROXIMATELY THREE HOURS OF THE YUP'IK LANGUAGE GOES OVER THE AIRWAVES.

SOME MORE:
MY LANGUAGE IS ALIVE BECUASE OF KYUK'S DEDICATION TO SERVING THE NEEDS OF IT'S LISTENERS AND VIEWERS. I MIGHT ADD, THAT THE STATION SERVES SOME FIFTY-SIX VILLAGES IN OUR AREA.

CURRENTLY, OUR STATION OFFERS TWO NEWS CASTS IN THE YUP'IK LANGUAGE. A-HALF HOUR AT NOON AND FIFTEEN MINUTES AT SIX-THIRTY IN THE EVENING.

MY DREAM IS TO PRODUCE TWENTY-MINUTES OF NEWS AT NOON WITH A FEATURE TYPE -- CLASS-ROOM FOR RADIO -- TEACHING THE YUP'IK LANGUAGE TO BOTH SPEAKERS AND NON-SPEAKERS ALIKE. LIKE-WISE FOR THE EVENING NEWS CAST.

HOWEVER, THIS DREAM IS ONLY A DREAM AS WE ARE ALL CURRENTLY IN A BUDGET CUTTING MODE. PERHAPS YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP MY PEOPLE AND THEIR LANGUAGE IN THIS REGARD.

AS I SAID EARLIER. WE, YOUNGER YUP'IK'S DON'T ALWAYS UNDERSTAND WHAT OUR ELDERS ARE TRYING TO SAY TO US AND LIKE ALL OTHER ALASKA NATIVE'S -- ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING OUR LANGUAGE.

BUT THROUGH THE AFORE-MENTIONED DREAM I SHARED WITH YOU -- ALL NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ALIKE WOULD LEARN AND TEACH AND HELP THE LANGUAGE SURVIVE.

SOME MORE: PAGE 5 OF 5

THIS IS A PROPOSAL I HAVE -- NOT ONLY FOR MY PEOPLE BUT ALSO FOR ALL OTHER NATIVE GROUPS IN ALASKA, INCLUDING THE NATIVE GROUPS IN THE LOWER-48.

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, ALL OF THE NATIVE AMERICANS MAY BE POOR IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, BUT WE WOULD BE VASTLY RICH IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR NATIVE SPEAKING ABILITIES.

TOI

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AGATHA NEVAK

I. Introduction

In 1990 Calista Elders Council was created as a non-profit organization regulated through state and federal laws. Calista Elders Council has four missions, all related to enhance the lives of Natives in the Calista region. The Calista Elders Council is operated by a board of directors elected by 1005 Native elders who are 65 years or older enrolled to Calista Corporation. To explain our position on Senate Bill 1595 let me explain our missions.

II. Four Missions adopted by the Elders:

A. To maintain and preserve the cultural, linguistic, and traditional lifestyles of Natives in the Calista Region.
B. To improve the health and welfare of all elders in western Alaska.
C. To encourage the political awareness of Natives in Calista Region.
D. To pursue, construct, and own an intermediate care facility in Bethel, Alaska.

III. To maintain and preserve the cultural, linguistic, and traditional lifestyles of Natives in the Calista Region

This mission is the most important of our four missions. The very core of survival of cultures throughout the Yupik villages is the Yupik language. Yupik literal translation means " genuine " without any mixed blood. Native dancing, traditional stories, celebrations, potlatches, cultural norms and mores are passed on through the Yupik Language. Many of these traditional stories or lifestyles are rapidly disappearing.

Quoting Dr, Micheal E. Krauss, head of the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, in his "Alaska Native Language Center Research Papers Number 4, 1980" page 45, he states: "The (Yupik) language is strongest in the Kuskokwim region, where it is the first language of entire communities. In many communities of the Bristol Bay and Yukon areas, Yupik is no longer spoken as a first language by some or any children."

On page 66 Dr. Krauss says: "The time has come to face the real future of Alaskan languages. There is not more time to waste deluding ourselves about the unpleasant and tragic aspects of this. Alaska Native languages are entering a period of final crisis for their future as living languages. Most of them are about to die."

On page 69, Dr. Krauss states: "We at the Alaska Native Language Center feel the responsibility for doing what we can to promote the survival of Alaska Native languages as living spoken languages. For this reason I am describing quite frankly what I fear is coming, without mincing words. I sincerely hope I am wrong. I hope that some parents at least are indeed consistently speaking the languages to their children, and I have not simply heard of them."

Central Yupik is about the only Yupik group that is not lost today. Upper Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, Bristol Bay, the younger generation understand Yupik, however do not speak it. The television generation, those born after 1970, in these areas do not understand Yupik.

Central Yupik families are in the point of turmoil today due to acculturation and outmigration of Natives to urban areas. Studies by the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska Native Language Center indicate we are at the verge of losing the Central Yupik if we do not take drastic steps to encourage our young families to speak Yupik. Many of these families are pressured that they must change lifestyles to adhere to the Western World. It is not easy for these families to be caught between two worlds, one that is unkind, one that is caring. Yupik people are caring people with living in a harsh environment wanting a simple lifestyle in the subsistence economies. We have survived for many untold centuries living on resources given to us by the Almighty.

Much work, cooperation, and commitment is needed to save our culture and languages. Accepting as fact ,that we must blindly change to conform to other cultures fairly accurately describes the younger generation in the 1980's. The elders in the villages understand Native Cultures and Languages are rapidly losing ground to the encroaching and predominant Western Culture. Calista Elders Council will work with to enhance this mission through long term strategic plan consisting of workshops, discussions, and meetings of elders and the young. This mission will take a team effort of all Natives living throughout the Calista Region.

IV. Senate Bill 1595 "To preserve and enhance the ability of Alaska Natives to speak and understand their native Languages"
For the reasons as stated in our short narration, Calista Elders Council supports Senate Bill 1595 introduced by U.S. Senator Frank H. Murkowski. Senate Bill 1595 once signed into law will help develop the very core to help save our dying language. We elders understand that we do not hold all the answers to save our native tongue, however through a united effort of all the young and old, the schools, churches, and most important theYupik families can we revive ourselves of as "genuine people.'

This decade will be critical for the survival of the Yupik. We have already lost half of our Yupik language to English. We have lost important parts of our culture, traditional lifestyle, and even our celebrations to the western world. No one will help our people except ourselves. No other group, Native or non-Native, will help in the survival of our culture and language so mus as we can.

Senate Bill 1595 once enacted will establish a foundation for grants needed to formalize Yupik Language Centers throughout our villages. Grants must go to the people in the villages who will use these funds for survival and preservation of our dying language. It is not to late to save our language.

Attchmt
Agatha Nevak.

The Elders Speak

Volume 1, Number 1 October, 1991 A Newsletter of the Calista Elders Council

Photos by Sue Gamache

Taking the oath of office as the first permanent board of directors in the annual meeting at Quinhagak are: (l-r) Irvin Brink, Kasigluk; Winifred Beans, Mtn. Village; Agatha Nevak, Bethel; Paul Ivan, Akiak; James Peter, Akiachak; John Phillip, Kongiganak; and Nick Lupie, Tuntutuliak. Absent but also elected were Isaiah Egoak, Napaskiak and Joe Ayagarak, Chevak.

First Annual Meeting held in Quinhagak

The first annual meeting of Calista Elders Council was held in Quinhagak on Friday, October 4. At that meeting, the members elected their first permanent board of Directors. Nine directors were elected to staggered terms from one to three years. The new directors elected to serve one year terms were Agatha Nevak of Bethel, John A. Phillip, Sr. of Kongiganak and Winifred Beans of Mountain Village. Elected to serve two year terms were Nick Lupie of Tuntutuliak, Paul J. Ivan, Sr. of Akiak, and Isaiah Egoak of Napaskiak. Irvin C. Brink, Sr. of Kasigluk, James Peter, Sr. of Akiachak, and Joe Ayagarak, Sr. of Chevak, were elected to serve three year terms.

Eighteen candidates filed for the nine positions. Term of office was determined by draw at the board meeting the following morning.

At that meeting, the new board of directors re-elected Irvin C. Brink as Chairman, Paul J. Ivan, Sr. as Vice Chairman, Agatha Nevak as Secretary and James Peter, Sr. as Treasurer. These officers will serve until the next annual meeting.

Also present at the annual meeting were directors of Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC). With approval by the Elders Council, non-members were allowed to participate in the discussions centering mainly on the health care facility for the Y-K region, on whether a fifteen bed critical care facility or a 75 bed intermediate care facility was most needed. The 75-bed facility was called for by unanimous resolution at the organizational meeting of the Elders in Anchorage this spring.

After lengthy debate, a motion passed tabling the discussion until the Governor's office has chance to develop a needs assessment for such facility, after which

(Continued on Page 3)

New directors attend AFN Convention

The first permanent board of directors of the Calista Elders Council attended the AFN Convention as delegates to the AFN Elders and Youth Conferences in Anchorage on October 14 and 15. Attending were Chairman Irvin C. Brink, Sr., Vice Chairman Paul J. Ivan, Sr., Secretary Agatha Nevak, Treasurer James Peter, Sr., and members Winifred Beans, Nick Lupie, Joe Ayagarak, Sr., Isaiah Egoak, and John A. Phillip, Sr.

The Elders Conference was titled "Traditional Spirituality - Our Gift to the Future." The joint session of elders and youth the following day was titled "Bridging the Gap Between Generations." The first day was spent addressing the need for traditional spirituality and featured a speech by Ermalee Hickel, wife of the Governor of Alaska. The joint session highlighted common concerns of the elders and youth and a panel of elders moderated the discussion.

The newly elected board was also scheduled to attend a subsistence workshop sponsored by the AFN on October 16 and the full AFN Convention on the 17th and 18th. The theme of the AFN Convention this year is "ANCSA, Twenty Years Later." Some of the dignitaries scheduled to speak were President Bush (via tape), Governor Hickel, the Alaska congressional delegation of Senator Stevens, Senator Murkowski and Congressman Young, and Secretary of the Interior Lujan.

The Elders Speak is a periodic informational publication of the Calista Elders Council, a non-profit corporation in the state of Alaska.

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Organizational conference a huge success

A bus was a regular part of the transportation for the delegates. Pictured here are Nick Lupie, Elizabeth Sharp, James Peter, Paul Ivan and Nicholai Berlin

Going through the line for some of the good food are delegates Milton Lewis, Willie Kamkoff, Tom Prince and Raphael Jimmy

Three generations of Yupik are represented by Joe Ayagarak, Sr., delegate from Chevak, his daughter Linda and his grandson Lee. Linda is a staff member for Calista Corp.

Elders who gathered at the organizational meeting of the Calista Elders Council (CEC), held in Anchorage on April 25, 1991, expressed overwhelming support for constructing an elder care facility in Bethel.

In addition to organizing, the elders passed three resolutions. Resolution 91-001 in support of construction of an intermediate care facility for the elderly in Bethel, also resolved that CEC will own and operate the facility and will pursue funding to operate the facility from the state and U.S. government. Resolution 91-002 authorized CEC obtaining Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 501(c)(3) nonprofit status under the Code. Resolution 91-003 supported the establishment of a single Senate district for the Yupik population as proposed by the Fish & Game Fund to the Advisory Reapportionment Board. All three resolutions were passed unanimously by the delegates.

Calista Corporation was mandated to organize CEC by shareholder motion at its annual meeting in Kasigluk in October of 1990. The objective of the meeting was to choose interim board members and organize CEC.

AVCP loaned electronic translating equipment and Marie Jankowski of Calista translated so the elders were able to participate fully in the conference.

In preparation for the meetings Calista sent a list of elders living in each village to the village corporations, asking elders to choose a delegate for the organizational meeting. Calista paid transportation and lodging for each delegate. There were 969 shareholders age 65 or older who qualified for membership in CEC at that time.

Presenters

Matthew Nicolai, Calista's vice president of corporate affairs, went over the bylaws and articles of incorporation, describing the positions and responsibilities of the board and management for the new corporation. He spoke in Yupik to help the elders understand the positions and decisions better. Nicolai also described other programs in which the Calista Elders Council might become involved.

Johnny T. Hawk, Calista president, outlined the five missions of the Calista Elders Council, included in this newsletter on page 3. He explained that we are not forming CEC for Calista's sake, but for purpose of the elders themselves. "CEC is for the elders, by the elders, and we are only here to help them get started," he said.

Felix P. Hess, Calista chairman, gave an overview of the Calista Elders Heritage Foundation, which will be a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization to replace the David K. Nicolai Scholarship Fund but will expand its missions to include other programs.

The Elders speak

Following these presentations elders spoke on issues that are important to them, all in Yupik.

Nick Lupie of Tuntutuliak asked when was the last time any of them had been invited to a school to speak, or to be a guest? He said he has been given the opportunity to tell stories in school, and sometimes these stories last for two hours. He thought telling kids about life in the old days from his own experiences was a good way for them to learn about their heritage.

Lena Long of St. Mary's said how happy she was about what she heard at this meeting, and that she was being taught things she didn't know. She said she didn't have much schooling and admires the educated people very much.. She was reluctant to stand up and talk but she asked herself, why did I come here if I wasn't going to contribute anything? She said she was very appreciative for the opportunity to participate.

Dick Anthony of Nightmute said he was glad to be a part of what happened during this week, and that he listened and learned a lot.

Edward Aguchak of Scammon Bay strongly felt the information at this meeting should be shared with others. He said he has a lot of knowledge to pass on and

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

still felt he could be of service to younger people.

Walter Amos of Mekoryuk talked about putting people into office, giving them the opportunity to learn, but when they become knowledgeable and understand what is going on, we remove or replace them. It is a waste to spend so much time educating them and then removing them, but people also shouldn't stay too long in order to give other people a chance, he added.

Raphael Jimmy of Chuloonawick said he'd never gone to many meetings but sensed this was a very important one and it was important to start in the right direction.

Isaiah Egoak of Napaskiak appreciated elders being asked for their ideas on things and not being told harshly. He liked the way this meeting was structured, where time was spent to go over documents section by section, explaining why they are necessary, what they mean and giving elders a chance to ask questions.

Milton Lewis, Sr., of Kwigillingok said he is 75 years old and asked a question about terms on the board.

Joseph Aparezuk of Bill Moore's Slough would like more papers translated into Yupik, but thanked the staff for their efforts, and was happy to be a part of the meeting.

Joe Phillip of Alakanuk was glad to be involved and said he collected knowledge, and was thankful we are trying to straighten things out.

John Phillip of Kongiganak thanked everyone for the opportunity to be a part of this gathering.

Ermalee Hickel speaks at luncheon

Ermalee Hickel, wife of Governor Walter J. Hickel, was the guest speaker during lunch. She talked about the importance of the Headstart Program and child and elder involvement, the need to return to spiritual values, to listen to the elders, honor one another, respect ourselves and others and to live soberly and cleanly.

"The spirit is the foundation for our love" she stated. She said we need to teach our children to ask for help from the creator and turn to the spirit within. If we fall down we must get up, we must respect our elders' knowledge and experience, our children and other young people so they can respect us.

She also spoke about individual responsibility, to seek balance and harmony with nature, and to encourage young people by dwelling on positive things.

"The power of the spirit is very strong in this room. It is up to each of us to work to influence positive changes," she concluded.

After her speech, **Billy McCann of Napakiak** said he would like Governor Hickel to learn the Yupik word "ikayungnaqciqamken," which means, "I will try to help you."

John A. Phillip, Sr. of Kongiganak speaks to the delegates.

Ermalee Hickel, wife of the Governor of Alaska, is warmly welcomed by Winifred Beans, elder delegate from Mountain Village

Congressman Young represented

Bill Sharrow from Congressman Don Young's Anchorage office said Young is committed to representing elders in the best way possible, in subsistence, protection of corporations, and anything that the federal government promised in the Statehood Act and especially ANCSA.

Sharrow expressed his pleasure in renewing old acquaintances from 30 years with the National Guard, saying he remembered the conditions in the 50's in the villages. He concluded that Young is committed to finding federal matching funds for construction of an elder care facility in Bethel.

Representative Ivan M. Ivan, D-Akiak, delivered the farewell speech encouraging elders to become more involved in villages, in governing affairs, in drug and alcohol abuse issues, and in economic development discussions.

In many communities elders keep away because they cannot read or write, yet they posses so much knowledge, needed now more than ever, to prepare the future for young people, he said.

He believes that sensible economic development should be encouraged because it can provide jobs that will give our people self respect and self reliance, rather than constantly looking for help from outside sources. Sensible economic development can occur without affecting subsistence foods that are so important to our survival as Yupik people, he said.

Annual Meeting

(Continued from Page 1)

the support of the Elders Council, Calista Corporation, YKHC and AVCP all be unified upon completion of this study and its recommendations.

The newly elected permanent board will travel to Anchorage to attend the AFN Convention to be held during the week of October 14. Before the full convention begins on October 17, the board will participate in the AFN Elders/Youth conference to be held on October 14 and 15 and the subsistence workshop on October 16.

Mission Statement

The following goals are part of the mission statement for Calista Elders Council that was unanimously approved at the organizational meeting held in Anchorage in April:

A. Maintain and preserve cultural, linguistic and traditional life-styles of Natives in the Calista region;

B. Improve Elders health and welfare in the Calista region;

C. Pursue, construct and own an intermediate care facility in Bethel;

D. Encourage and enhance Elders participation in the political process; and

E. Foster and encourage education of young people within the Calista region.

Elders at the organizational conference elected an interim board of directors to servie until the first annual meeting. Pictured above are (top row) Irvin C. Brink, Paul J. Ivan, Sr. and James Peter. Bottom row are Edward Aguchak, Winifred Beans, Agatha Nevak and Nick Lupie. Not pictured are Michael Albert of Tununak and Vernon Evan of Marshall. The board elected Mr. Brink as Chairman, Mr. Ivan as Vice Chairman, Agatha Nevak as Secretary and James Peter as Treasurer.

Director Winifred Beans of Mountain Village testifies about Reapportionment in St. Mary's in April. She is shown here with Xavier Keyes of Azachorok, Inc.

Council supports new reapportionment plan

Winifred Beans of Mountain Village, a director of the Calista Elders Council testified at the hearings of Governor Hickel's Advisory Reapportionment Board in St. Mary's in April. Her testimony supported the position of the Fish & Game Fund in their proposal to unite the Yupik peoples into a single senate district.

In September, Governor Hickel submitted a plan to be approved by the U.S. Justice Department, in which nearly all of the Yupik villages are now part of new election districts 37 and 38. Each district will elect a representative for the House in Juneau and the combined districts will elect a senator for the state Senate.

The Reapportionment Plan has been challenged by several groups in both state and federal courts, and is still subject to change, but if the plan holds, this will certainly mean greater political power for the Yupik people. The Justice Department must rule on whether the plan conforms to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Tom Daniel, an attorney for the Fish & Game Fund on reapportionment, in August expressed an opinion that the plan will probably be approved by the Justice Department.

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Written Testimony of Ruth S. Ridley, Han Athabascan from Eagle, Alaska

Grew up speaking Han but could never speak in school.

Had a grandma that never spoke English but spoke Tagoo from Canada - what the Native Bible and songbook are written in. she spoke to us in Tagoo and we spoke back in Han. Which now helps us to understand Kutchin. The real older people can understand us from different dialects.

I believe kids not knowing their language enhances their drinking, drugs, etc. They are caught between two worlds.

Our language gives our elders access to teach us religion and advice and culture. They are more comfortable in speaking their language since they don't know English well.

We have to teach the parents right along with their children.

The Alaska Native Language Center has done much but we have to help in our own communities.

Our language makes exactly who we are.

I certainly hope this bill and Georgianna's bill pass.

31 October 1991

RE: Alaska Native Languages Preservation Act

Senator Frank Murkowski
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

Dear Sen. Murkowski:

I wish to testify on the upcoming bill for an Alaska Native Languages Preservation Act.

Having been a student of Alaskan Eskimo languages for fifteen years now, I speak Inupiaq and am learning Yup'ik. Since 1982, I have been involved in team-teaching Alaskan Eskimo languages, training bilingual educators, and conducting research on Alaskan Eskimo language survival.

I will not take up time talking about why the languages of Alaska are important; the Native people can do that themselves much better than I can. But as a professionally trained linguistic anthropologist and language planner, I believe I have some observations which may be useful.

Regarding Alaska Native languages and the schools. There is a massive amount of largely conclusive evidence pointing to how programs of bilingual education in schools can potentially reinforce the home language of linguistic minority students, as well as clear evidence on how bilingual education programs can teach a language to children if they arrive at school not already speaking it. Nevertheless, after having examined (largely first hand) the bilingual programs along the Eskimo coast, from Barrow to Bristol Bay, I am sad to report that there is not one Alaskan school district, to my knowledge, which has a program of bilingual education that is designed realistically to reinforce the home language, or to allow the children to become speakers of an Alaska Native language (Iutzi-Mitchell 1990).

Regarding research on language policy. There has been substantial time and funding expended -- quite usefully -- to document Alaska Native languages, and the job is not yet done. But this is only one possible aspect of language preservation. If the unique languages of Alaska are to continue as spoken languages of the Native peoples themselves, we desperately need to identify precisely the social and historical processes that have discouraged their use in the first place, and then devise practical means of reversing these trends. Alaska Native language policies for the last hundred years have been largely haphazard, when not outright intentionally destructive. The need for Native people intelligently to plan their own language policies is so great, that I see absolutely no way at all that these twenty Native languages can survive without it. Such would require research on Native language survival, subsequent training on language planning to Native community members, and facilitation for Native communities to design, implement, and evaluate their language policies.

Regarding funding and control of funding. I would suggest that it is most unrealistic to expect that these languages, after almost a century of federally-funded programs aimed (both intentionally and de facto) directly at their destruction, could recover their inertia with anything less than one million dollars per year, per language. Given that billions of dollars have been spent towards their eradication, this $20 million per year for a decade or so literally would be small compensation for past injustices. I believe that funding at a significantly lower level than suggested here would have a very small chance of success. Based on my own research in southwest Alaska since 1987, Yup'ik people have identified to me the important role that employment and wage labor patterns have had in language loss. If such $1 million funding per language were provided directly to tribal or other local Native organizations, specifically ear-marked for use promoting the survival of their traditional languages, not only would the funds directly encourage such language preservation, but the resultant employment, both in and for the Native language, would have perhaps a multiplier effect on the success of the funds.

It is possible for each of the twenty Alaska Native languages to survive through the 21st century. It is highly unlikely that any of them will do so without well-supported, indigenous language planning.

I thank you for considering my testimony.

ap6223

Sincerely yours,

Roy D Iutzi-Mitchell

Roy D. Iutzi-Mitchell
Ph.D. candidate, U.C. Berkeley
P.O. Box 1128
Bethel, Alaska 99559-1128

Reference:
Iutzi-Mitchell, Roy D. 1990.
"Can Bilingual Education Contribute to the Survival of Eskimo Languages?" Presented at the session on Language and Education Policies Affecting Hunting and Gathering Peoples, 6th International Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies; Fairbanks.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGE OLANNA, SR.

S.1595
Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act Of 1991

In order for people to understand the language, it must be used in the community, as well as in the schools.

Creating Language Centers manned by non-Native speakers is not enough. For students who have lost the language, Linguistics must be included in the study of the language. That is we have to teach phonology which focuses on speech sounds. This includes morphology which deals with morphomes and into syntax.

This can only mean, we need trained bilingual teachers who can speak the language. The teachers have to be trained to break down the concepts above so that the students who lost the language can use the sounds into meaningful communication. Bilingual teaches without training can only teach one word at the time. Our Native language have to be written in English language uses many words or sentences. Where as in Native language we often can only say a word or a sound.

If the Language centers were used, then I would go with the program if that center is overseen by Native who is trained. Again we have a problem here, how many Natives have degrees in higher learning to do the job? We have to start training the resources at the same time which is costly. Another problem is the Language curriculum must be align with the district curriculum. The teachers should able to teach science or another subject, possiblly in high school level. The elementary level should deal with morphology under the heading of syntax.

The time factor or the historical linguistics have to be included so the learner will know where the word came from. Our language changed with time. We now have Native words which are combined with English words.

The elders have to be part of the learning process. In today's world, they must be paid to take part in teaching the younger generations.

I think we would be better off if we can provide funds to train our Bilingual teachers than creating centers. Most of the teachers we have now have families and can't afford to attend summer sessions or take courses. It is very expensive to travel to Fairbanks or to Anchorage with a family.

We should be training bilingual teachers for the future. Not to train them after they are hired. There is no incentive for teachers to better themselves. No ladder or promotion given to our bilingual teachers.

This is my 10th year of teaching in my school district. I was born and raised here in Shishmaref. It was very hard getting my degree while raising a family. No one supported me with money but at that time, the air fares were lower than they are now. To travel to Nome from Shishmaref is now

$98 one way. Last time I went to Fairbanks with my two kids, the airfare for one way was around $900+. When we got home we were broke for a month.

At the campus, everything must be paid in advance. No car to use for shopping and everything was far from where we stayed. Not too many people with families like to deal with hardship like this. It's lot easier to accept a job, just to have a job.

Sincerely,

George Olanna Sr.

George Olanna,Sr.

COALITION FOR INDIAN EDUCATION

TESTIMONY
PRESENTED AT THE ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIONS
CONVENTION
OCTOBER 19, 1991

Thank you for providing this opportunity to present our views concerning Senate Bill #1595, the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991. This is much needed legislation to tie in with the recently passed Native American Language Act, which has been a landmark bill because it finally recognizes the failed Federal policy after 120 years of attempting to eliminate all Native languages.

The Coalition For Indian Education is a national American Indian and Alaska Natives organization headquartered in Albuquerque, New Mexico, whose members and board work to support Indian Education concerns. Our Fourth Annual Conference will be held this year in Albuquerque November 20-22 and feature two full tracks of workshops on proven career preparation and Exemplary programs.

Senate Bill #1595 is important legislation because Native language and culture are intertwined. In the past boarding schools attempted to destroy Native language use by students through punishment and humiliation, now many of today's public schools accomplish the same end through their inattention to Native languages by being English dominate in order to reach educational goals. English is often seen as a more competitive language in today's world where there are increasingly strong efforts to achieve higher economic self-determination for Tribes and villages sometimes at the detriment of traditional values and culture. In addition, mass media has been used to educate and entertain (largely in English) to provide a type of language assimilation that erodes Native languages which are important and living carriers of Native values and culture.

(MORE)

3620 Wyoming N.E., Suite 206 • Albuquerque, N.M. 87111 • (505) 275-9788

It has been estimated that less than 200 Native languages remain in some kind of spoken form today. Of that total less than 90 Native languages are spoken by people of all ages. Efforts to eliminate Native languages has been a long and largely successful enterprise. Other Native languages are not still spoken, but locked into linguistic and ethnographic texts waiting to be rediscovered by Native peoples who seek their traditional values and self-identity. In my own state of Oregon, termination of Tribes had a devasting affect on Tribal members. Now that many of these Oregon Tribes have been Federally Recognized again, many have discovered difficulty in regaining their culture intact without their own Native language. Native languages are not of interest to Tribes merely as a curiosity, but because they are a profound part of their distinct traditional values and culture.

Language is a living and changing reflection of our society. Traditional stories recorded in English-only do not provide the subtext and full meaning of the stories and traditions. Language contains the essence of the cultural values of the community through the shared understanding of the language. Words contain more than equivalent English words, they contain the shared community knowledge inherent with the word. While the Native American Language Act has finally changed Federal policy, unfortunately it does not in itself provide funds to promote Native languages. Also, unfortunately, Senate Bill #1595 does not include meeting the needs of ALL Native people who have suffered from efforts to eliminate their Native languages and cultures.

(MORE)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Coalition For Indian Education would like to propose a wider initiative that would create a Native American Language Program for all American Indian and Alaska Natives. This new program would provide funds for Tribe and villages to: (1) document their Native language in whatever form most suitable, (2) develop appropriate Native language curriculum, and (3) provide instruction to Tribal and village members. We have estimated that a realistic budget of $7 million would be required to adequately fund such an undertaking on a national basis. Perhaps the Bureau of Indian Affairs would be the most appropriate agency responsible.

I would again like to thank you for providing this opportunity to provide testimony today on this most important subject. Perhaps with the upcoming five hundreth anniversary of the arrival of Columbus in this country it would seem appropriate that efforts finally begin to support our indigenous cultures and languages.

(This testimony was prepared by Jim Thornton, Chair, CIE Legislative Committee, 9140 Cape Arago Highway, Coos Bay, Oregon 97420-9645.)

(END)

U.S.ENGLISH POLICY POSITION:

Native American Languages

U.S.ENGLISH has adopted a policy position on the preservation of Native American languages. The following considerations shaped the development of our position:

* The languages of Native Americans are part of the heritage of the North American Continent. While we are opposed to the offical institutionalization of other immigrant languages in competition with English, we recognise as a matter of justice that Native Americans should have opportunities to maintain their own languages.

* Native American languages are not spoken anywhere else in the world, and some would surely disappear without affirmative encouragement. This would be a loss to all humankind, and not just the affected tribes. We believe that the preservation of Native American languages is an intellectual obligation we must assume.

* Many Native American tribes enjoy some form of autonomy and/or sovereignty, which is already *de facto* recognition of their special status in American society.

U.S.ENGLISH therefore endorses the following policy principles:

A.) Recognition of and respect for the right of Native American tribes who live in territories granted a measure of autonomy to maintain their culture and language. The tribal culture is paramount in these jurisdictions, and bilingual education could be the vehicle for introducing *English* into the curriculum.

This would apply to Indians on reservations, to Eskimos and Aleuts living in villages under the terms of the Native Alaskan Claims Settlement Act, and to Hawaiian communities.

B.) Those Native Americans who leave the tribal communities to live in society-at-large and whose children attend regular public schools are governed by the same principles as everybody else. Distancing one's self from the fountain of one's native culture inevitably diminishes cultural ties, and leads to *rapprochement* to the majority culture.

In areas where there are enough interested parents to make it practical, a native language can be offered as an additional subject, even in the primary grades.

C.) Some federal funds should be made available at the post-secondary level to encourage the study of Native American languages and cultures as rigorous academic disciplines. This is essential to help record and preserve languages threatened with extinction.

(3/27/84)

STATEMENT BY
S. TIMOTHY WAPATO, COMMISSIONER
ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS
ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
FOR THE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony for the record on S. 1595, the "Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991." This legislation would enhance the ability of Alaskan Natives to speak their native languages, and also preserve and expand knowledge about such languages. Preserving a group's language and ensuring its continuation is an important step toward strengthening that group's identity.

The Administration for Native Americans (ANA) fully supports the concept behind this bill, because the continuation of a native language is an important element in the social development of Alaskan Natives' cultures. However, we do not support the establishment of a new grant program within ANA, since we already have sufficient authority to carry out the bill's purpose under the Native American Programs Act of 1974.

In addition, we have several other concerns about this legislation. We object to the 10 percent grantee match as proposed in Section 803B (d) of S. 1595. The Administration strongly urges the Congress to amend this section to reflect a 20 percent matching requirement by the grantee in order to be consistent with other grant authorities under the Native American Programs Act. Moreover, we object to any use of other Federal dollars to satisfy the required grantee match.

The goal of the Native American Programs Act is to promote social and economic self-sufficiency among Native populations. This goal is sufficiently broad to encompass the purposes of preserving native culture and language, and ANA already provides funding to eligible organizations for this purpose under the Social and Economic Development Strategies (SEDS) program.

The SEDS approach has strengthened the capacity of Native American communities to address their long-term social, economic and governance needs. Recognizing the particular needs of Alaskan Natives, ANA implemented a special Alaska social and economic initiative to provide financial assistance at the village level in [illegible]. Furthermore, beginning in fiscal year 1991, eligible Alaskan Native organizations were allowed to compete in the general ANA program announcement. Alaskan-specific grants totaled over $4 million in FY 1991.

Since Alaska Native Corporations were officially recognized only 20 years ago, cultural heritage programs have just recently emerged in Alaska. Language is a common theme central to most of these projects. As a result, the Administration for Native Americans is receiving an increasing number of applications from Alaskan Native villages and organizations in order to further enhance and strengthen tribal government through cultural heritage preservation activities.

I also am pleased to report that over the past several years there has been a significant cultural renaissance in Native American communities. In response to this trend, ANA developed a priority area in its Coordinated Discretionary Program (CDP) to develop Native American Cultural Centers. Four grants were awarded for this purpose in FY 1991. Language preservation and enhancement were included in these projects.

In summary, language preservation and enhancement is important to the continuation of our Native cultures. ANA will continue efforts to promote these activities throughout the Native American community, and believes this legislation is unnecessary.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on this important legislation.

APA370

P.O. Box 688
Bethel, Alaska 99559

As a parent and educator who has lived in rural Alaska for over twenty years, I strongly support Senate Bill 1595 sponsored by Senator Murkowski which seeks to "To preserve and enhance the ability of Alaska Natives to speak and understand their native languages.

As an employee of the Lower Kuskokwim School District, I know that the district provides educational services to approximately 2600 students in 28 villages. Of all the students enrolled in the spring of 1990, over 1200 students are primary Yup'ik speakers, an additional 600 students speak English but require English as A Second Language and Yup'ik as a Second Language instruction. The total student enrollment requiring special attention in the area of Second Language Instruction comprises over 1800 students.

As a result, the district has given significant time, funding, and committment to developing first language instructional programs that are appropriate to the special language needs of the students in this area. Several models of instruction are implemented in order to accommodate varied student needs ranging from complete instruction in Yup'ik in grades k-2, Yup'ik language maintainance in grades 3-12, to required Yup'ik As A Second Language for students in villages who no longer speak their native languages.

The committment of the District Board of Education to the usage of the native language in our instructional programs is unique and singular in the state of Alaska.

Compelling reasons for implementing the programs which utilize the native language include:

1. Children have the inherent right to enter school and speak and learn in the language which they speak and understand.

2. If a child is to grow with self respect, and a strong self esteem, schools must convey the message that his/her native language is an important and valid tool for learning.

3. There is research evidence that a sound base in the native first language is required for the acquisition of a second language.

4. We need to work collectively as educators to promote and encourage the indigeneous language.....unless we would like to live and work in a region 10 years from now that only remembers the language that once was, through the use of an occasional song, dance or feast.

The opportunity afforded an Alaska Native village, a consortium of Alaska Native villages; or regional corporation established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) to obtain funding for facilities serving as language centers through the passage of this bill would, in my opinion, greatly empower the local native communities of Alaska to implement and establish local language programs. At this time no other local option exists. The passage of this bill would enable communities to work in tandem or in support of the existing educational services. More importantly, the bill would also provide a balance and extension to services provided by the schools in this area and an opportunity for local communities to define and direct their own language needs regarding the restorationl or maintenance of local native languages. I strongly support the passage of Senate Bill 1595.

Respectfully submitted by:

Phyllis Williams

FAIRBANKS NATIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.
310½ First Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: (907) 452-1648 / 456-5151

August 26, 1991

Honorable Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0202

Dear Senator Murkowski:

I would like to offer you our wholehearted support for S.1595. This legislation, if adopted will show Native Elders of Alaska that their culture is valued and respected. In preservation of culture, saving the language is of utmost importance. As you said in your July 31, 1991 statement for the congressional record, the culture of the Native people of Alaska is valued and should be encouraged and preserved.

Today, many Native people cannot speak their language and have suffered from it. By this, I mean traditional stories, teachings and beliefs have not been passed on to generations. Your Bill, S.1595, is of significant importance today, because of the possibility of losing the language altogether. The Native people, the Elders, understand the value of language preservation. In some schools and school districts, in the State, the language is encouraged, but your efforts with this Bill, will help in that effort.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks Native Association, we offer our deep support for S.1595.

Sincerely,

Samuel S. Demientieff
Executive Director

x ABF324

SSD/bjb
cc: Don Lee

ADMINISTRATION/ACCOUNTING
452-1648 or 456-5151
•
JOHNSON O'MALLEY
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
"SAAKKAAYA CENTER"
451-6201 or 451-6211 or 452-8344
•
EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT
456-2311
•
ALASKA BUSINESS COUNSELING
SERVICE
452-1648

COMMUNITY SERVICES
452-1648
Counseling Services
Elders Program
Substance Abuse Regional Counselor
Training Program

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE SERVICES
Director
452-6215
•
RCAOA Detox Center
456-1053
•
RCAOA Treatment Center
456-1053
•
RCAOA Halfway House
452-8761
•
Family Focus
452-5802

Out-Patient Services
456-1101
•
Fairbanks Alcohol Safety
Action Program
452-6144
•
Youth Drug Abuse Prevention
452-5085

Sealaska Heritage Foundation
One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 201 • Juneau, Alaska 99801 • (907) 463-4844

23 October 1991

The Honorable Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0202

APA713

Dear Senator Murkowski:

This correspondence is in support of S. 1595, an act to preserve and enhance the ability of Alaska Natives to speak and understand their Native languages. You are applauded and commended by the Native people of Alaska for introducing the above legislation.

The culture and heritage of any people is their language. Without a language it is almost impossible to transfer the values that have been with the indigenous peoples. In a recent Time article (September 23, 1991) it was reported:

> "The most immediate tragedy in the loss of knowledge and traditions is for the tribes themselves. They do not always die out, but the soul of their culture withers away. Often left behind are people who are shadows of what they once were..."

Without the preservation of our language, it is difficult to maintain the knowledge and traditions of our tribes, so your legislation is very important to us.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our wholehearted support of Senate Bill 1595. I am certain you will be receiving support from other tribes.

Sincerely,

David G. Katzeek
President

cc: The Honorable Ted Stevens, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Don Young, U.S. House of Representatives

Copy to Fthm

Incorporated
1983
Denakkanaaga
1302 21st Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-5827

August 15, 1991

Senator Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0202

Dear Senator Murkowski:

Thank you for your letter of August 7th, containing a copy of your bill S. 1595, the "Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991" and your floor statement in the Congressional Record of July 31, 1991.

We are very happy that you have introduced the bill since our Denakkannaga elders have long wanted assistance in the preservation of their Native languages. We support and thank you for your action.

We will be notifying our elders and our villages so that your bill will gain more support as it proceeds through the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs on its long way toward final passage. We would like to follow its progress, so we hope your office will continue to keep us informed as to the bill's status.

Basee'

Sincerely,

Don Lee

Don Lee
Executive Director

AOV863

August 26, 1991

Sen. Frank Murkowski
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.   99811

Dear Senator Murkowski,

I, wholeheartedly, support any bill coming before congress that will help preserve our Native languages and culture.

I lived with my grandparents for the first four years of my life. As a result, I can somewhat understand my Athabascan language. I remember thinking, after my gramma passed away and I had to go live with my parents, how I missed listening to my gramma talk "Indian" to my grampa. My parents rarely talked in our Native tongue around us and since it was not permitted in school, my brothers, sisters and I never learned.

I remember being proud to be able to understand when most of my friends in grade school couldn't. Then I came to high school in Fairbanks and found considerable disappointment when I heard my new friends from Allakaket, Pt. Barrow, Hughes and other northern villages all talking their language.

When I went to school at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, I had the opportunity to take an Athabascan language class taught by Eliza Jones. I wanted to be able to speak the words that I understood and teach my children what I learned. Unfortunatedly, the class was only a semester long and really quite basic. However, Eliza's teaching technique and use of the written language made quite an impression on me. It would be wonderful if we had more instructors like Eliza in each school throughout the state teaching respective dialects. It would be a dream come true to find that my daughters could enroll in Athabascan classes like they do French, German and Spanish.

Thank you for your time to read my letter.

Very Sincerely,

Annie Mayo
P.O. Box 55484
North Pole, Alaska   99705

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.
122 FIRST AVENUE
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701-4897
PHONE (907) 452-8251 FAX (907) 451-8936

1991 [illegible] AM [illegible]

September 13, 1991

A0T201

Senator Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0202

Dear Senator Murkowski:

On behalf of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. (TCC), I wish to convey my deepest appreciation to you and your staff for all the efforts and hard work expended in introducing Senate Bill 1595 entitled "Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991". I wholeheartedly support Senate Bill 1595.

As a Native non-profit consortium of forty-three (43) Athabascan villages within the Interior of Alaska, the TCC, Inc. service area encompasses nine distinct Athabascan language groups: Kutchin, Han, Upper Tanana, Tanacross, Tanana, Koyukon, Holikachuk, Ingalik, and Upper Kuskokwim. Of the eight school districts within the TCC region, there are currently only two with established bilingual programs, Ingalik and Kutchin. We are aware that of the 20 different languages groups inherent within the indigenous cultures in the State of Alaska, only two are still being spoken by a significant portion of children. Those two languages are Siberian Yupik (spoken on St. Lawrence Island), and Central Yupik (spoken in Southwestern Alaska). Linguists predict that only these two Alaskan Native languages out of the twenty that exist will have a good chance of surviving into the next century as viable, living and spoken languages, unless concerted efforts are immediately initiated. While we are fortunate to have elders within the Interior from each of the nine Athabascan language groups who can speak their language fluently, we estimate, that because of their advanced age many of them will no longer be with us twenty years from now, and their knowledge of our languages will be lost.

The preservation and enhancement of the Athabascan languages has been an issue of discussion and concern of the Athabascan elders of the Interior for the past several generations! Their concerns have been shared by the youth delegates to the TCC Annual Convention who reported on March 17, 1988, that:

> "Many youth delegates have expressed a concern for learning their Native tongue. They would like to see Native languages being taught in schools for a credit. All Alaskan Natives know we have to do something about the low percentage of Natives who fluently speak their Native language. The language is the basis for our culture, without it - we are lost. I hope TCC will do their BEST to implement a Native language course in school curriculums or direct the Board of Education to do so."

Numerous resolutions have been introduced at TCC Annual Conventions over the years which support the concerns of Athabascan elders and youth. Budget constraints, and the lack of ongoing commitment on the part of school district personnel and funding agencies have prevented us from instituting long range Athabascan language programs.

In reference to the preservation and enhancement of the Athabascan languages and culture, we receive our direction from the elders who have stated consistently that respect and adherence to traditional culture and values are an important part of the equation which allows Native people within the TCC region to be able to develop and maintain their self-esteem and community identity. Our elders advise us that tradition and cultural values form the unique root from which Athabascan people can feel strong as a group of people while bridging the gap with the Western culture. Athabascan people have suffered much from alcoholism, domestic violence, and suicide caused by the acceleration of rapid changes in their lifestyles within the past 50 years. Language and the unique thoughts and concepts inherent in language are viewed as important tools which serve to empower individuals by giving them the strong values which define who they are.

Through the enactment of Senate Bill 1595, it is hoped that the preservation and enhancement of our Athabascan languages and cultural values will assist greatly in circumventing many of the social problems facing our people. We feel that we must continue to learn from the elders as much as possible before they leave us. We would appreciate the support of the federal legislation you propose to assist us in learning thoroughly, through our languages the lessons of our ancestors, through their thoughts and their words...through our Native languages. Thank you, Senator Murkowski, for Senate Bill 1595. We support you in this bill, and are committed to its intent. We look forward toward assisting you in your efforts. We intend to be actively involved in the planning and management of programs to preserve and enhance the nine Athabascan languages within the TCC region and extend to you our fullest support and assistance in the implementation of the legislation introduced through your commitment, sensitivity and insight about Alaskan Native languages.

Sincerely,

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.

Will Mayo

Will Mayo
President

cc: TCC Executive Board of Directors
TCC Subregional Directors
Village Councils

991-45.2

Office of the Dean
College of Rural Alaska
(907) 474-7143

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-0900

1991 S P 3 AM

September 25, 1991

Senator Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0202

Dear Senator Murkowski:

On behalf of the College of Rural Alaska I wish to convey our support for Senate Bill 1595 entitled "Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991." Thank you for your effort and hard work on introducing this most important bill.

Senate Bill 1595 is extremely important to Alaska because of the existence of many Native languages. Our commitment to Alaska Natives whose future identity is so closely related to the viability of their languages continued existence is of utmost importance. We know how critical language survival is to the survival of an indigenous world view and its contribution to our world.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jerry

Gerald V. Mohatt, Dean
College of Rural Alaska

GVM:hms

AFR187

TOK NATIVE ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 372
Tok, Alaska 99780

AOV861

September 11, 1991

Senator Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0202

Dear Senator Murkowski:

On behalf of our association, we applaud your initiative in introducing Senate Bill #1595, "Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991."

By being able to utilize additional resources, such as your bill would provide, we would be able to begin the process of having fundamental native language programs developed for our people.

Time is of essence on this issue, as with each passing year fewer of our people are able to understand or speak their traditional language.

Therefore, we urge you to continue in your efforts for the eventual passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Virginia Moore

Virginia Moore, President
Tok Native Association

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

AVCP

Association of Village Council Presidents
P.O. Box 219 • Bethel, Alaska 99559 • Phone 543-3521

July 12, 1991

Honorable Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear senator Murkowski:

AVCP supports the draft legislation on the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991.

Our Alaska Native languages are vital to the continued survival of our culture and also for the pride and self-esteem of our young Native people. The language and culture of the Native people of Alaska is still strong and must be kept strong because it is part of the history of our country. Therefore, it is very important that the passage of this bill is promoted.

Sincerely,

ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS, Inc.
Willie Kasayulie, Chairman

A0V943

Myron P. Naneng, President

cc: Julie Kitka, President - AFN
Senator Daniel Inouye
Senator Ted Stevens
Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs - Attn: Pat Zell

Hughes Village Council
P. O. Box 45010
Hughes, AK. 99745
Phone (907)889-2206

September 16, 1991

AOY863

Senator Murkowski
United States Senate
[illegible] Suite 709
Washington D. C. 20510-0203

Dear Senator Murkowski:

I am writing on behalf of the Hughes Village Council, we appreciate all the work you and your staff did to introduce on Senate Bill 1595 entitled "Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991". We support Senate Bill 1595, one hundred percent.

We think that our Native Languages are very important to our Native people to speak and understand it, if we don't start trying to preserve our Native Language now we will soon loose it. It is a very good idea to start seeing the Native Languages taught in the schools, we think this should be done soon. Like the youth said they would like to earn credits to learn their Native Languages in school, this would probably encourage them to get everything possible out of the class.

Once again, we would like to thank you and your staff for all the effort you put in Senate Bill 1595.

Sincerely,

Lige Ambrose for Gerald Oldman

Gerald Oldman,
Chief

GO/tew

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TOZITNA, LIMITED
P.O. Box 129
Tanana, Alaska 99777
(366-7255)

aoz768

October 10, 1991

Senator Frank Murkowski
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-0202

Dear Senator Murkowski,

I read with great interest an article in the Tanana Chiefs's Newspaper "The Council", on your efforts to help the Native People of Alaska preserve the Native Language. I would like to relate to you what we have doing here in Tanana.

For many years we have been trying to incorporate the teaching of the Koyukon Athabascan Language into our school system. When we first proposed this program to the Indian Ed Committee, I don't think we realized how hard it could be to teach a language without the support of the parents at home. This is only one part of the problem. The other problem is not with the children not wanting to learn but with finding somebody to come in every day to teach these young children. Most of the people who speak the language fluently are about 50 and older. The school is very supportive in trying their best to incorporate the language into the everyday teachings, but we still need help in training people to teach. My suggestions would be to make available an Athabascan Curriculum for adults and children to be able to take into their homes and learn on there own. I truly think your efforts are applaudable and I fully support what you are trying to do for the Native people. Our children in Tanana are truly proud of who they are, and they show it by practicing their traditional dance and song. For their efforts they are being invited around the state to perform. Once again thank you for what you are doing,

Sincerely,

Julie Roberts

Julie M. Roberts
Tozitna Manager

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

Interior Campus-Tok Center
College of Rural Alaska
Box 464 • Tok, Alaska • 99780 • (907) 883-5613

October 28, 1991

Honorable Frank H. Murskowski
United States Senator
Select Committee on Indian Affairs
222 West 7th Avenue, Box 1
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-3735

Dear Senator Murskowski:

I want to thank you for the invitation to testify at your hearing during the AFN convention recently. Because I was unable to be away from my office at that time, I am sending you this written testimony which I understand will be added to the record.

Unlike many who have already testified, I am not an Alaskan Native. As such, I don't have the direct cultural linkage from which to deliver first hand knowledge from a First Nation's people. However, I have lived, worked or traveled throughout rural Alaska for my 10 years as an Alaskan citizen. During this time, my contact with Alaskan Natives has been both in my role as a social service provider and as an educator.

As Coordinator for Tanana Chiefs Conference alcohol program centered in Tok, I had first hand opportunity to work with individuals, families, and entire communities in our region. As you know, substance abuse, suicide, domestic violence and a number of other social maladies are of crisis proportions in most of our village communities. I am sure you also know that such social ills were not historically a part of Alaska Native culture or lifestyles. These problems have only be around for the past 75 years or so and most dramatically for the past 25 years.

From my experience working as a social service provider and now as an

Coordinator/educator under the University of Alaska Fairbanks in this same region, it is clear to me that the further away Alaska Natives are from their culture and heritage, the greater the social dysfunction and tragedy.

When I and others have taken the time to listen to various native elders in our state, they warn of the loss of their culture and language. Though recognizing that changes are taking place more rapidly for the generations of today in comparison to the generations up to their own parents and grandparents, they explain that leaving their culture behind means only death to their culture and people. Our recently deceased chief, Andrew Isaac, repeatedly preached of the need to "walk in both worlds" rather than leaving one world behind.

Coupling the wisdom of our native elders to my own direct observations, it is obvious that a people without it's traditions and language, is a people of lost identity. There is no greater test of self esteem than that of a lost identity. Truly, many of the social problems of our native people are the result of low self esteem and the surgical separation from their roots.

Throughout the history of the world, the greatest web connecting people of all nationalities has been a common language. Besides being a social convenience, language unifies nations and guarantees a history. The spirit of a people is housed in it's language.

If the Native people of Alaska are to survive, their language must be preserved in the "active population". Museums and archives are but storehouses necessary only to fill in the voids of a lost or waning history. Were the information passed along from generation to generation, the need for such institutions or warehouses would be minimal. It is imperative that the Alaska Native languages be kept alive and that the primary "warehouses" be in the minds and hearts of today's native youth.

In my other capacity as a regional school boardmember, it is clear to me that public schools will not fill the void. Suffice it to say, the present education system is not meeting the needs of "western" education much less the needs of native cultures. It will take outside initiative such as that being proposed in Senate Bill #1595 to begin bridging the vast canyon separating the cultural needs of native children from the public and higher education institutions as presently available.

Besides additional resources, there need to be programs and people identified which can fulfill objectives of legislations such as SB 1595. Simple turning earmarked money over to the existing education institutions will not insure progress. It is very important that the resources be controlled by groups who are accountable to their constituencies. It is also important the Alaskan programs be developed by those with proven success.

One model which is enhancing natural teachers training is a certification process found in Whitehorse, Yukon. The Yukon Native Language Centre has a 3 year program with First Nation's people now in 17 different schools as professional teachers. Canadians recognize the importance of preserving their languages by recognizing these teachers as "professionals" along with the gratuities and honors of a professional. Alaska has some bilingual programs in a few districts, but certainly nothing as serious as that of our Canadian neighbors. Therefore, in researching further for your bill, I would recommend that you contact John Ritter, Director of YNLC, to learn of their success with hopes of directing the resources of SB 1595 down similar pathways.

Thank you for SB 1595 and for considering this and other supportive testimony.

Sincerely,

Larry Roberts, M.Ed.
Coordinator

Original to Jerry L.!

Valdez
Tatitlek
Eyak
Chenega
Seward
English Bay
Port Graham
the north pacific rim

1991

July 3, 1991

The Honorable Frank Murkowski
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

The North Pacific Rim congratulates you on your proposed amendment to The Native American Programs Act of 1974 titled the "Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991". We are very pleased with your recognition of the value of preserving and enhancing Alaska Native languages.

As a language is a central component of any culture the preservation of a language can only help with the development of pride in heritage and thus serve as a self esteem builder. As you are undoubtedly aware, one of the most effective methods we can use in combatting self destructive behavior in Alaska Native communities is through the development of self esteem.

We are very supportive of your efforts in this area and encourage you to continue with the development of this important legislation. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Rolland
Executive Director

cc: Alaska Federation of Natives

AFB136

3300 "C" Street / Anchorage, Alaska 99503-3920 / Ph. (907) 562-4155 / Fax (907) 563-2891
The Non-Profit Corporation Serving The People Of The Chugach Native Region

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

August 27, 1991

Senator Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Building
Washington, D.C.   20510-0202

Dear Mr. Murkowski:

I am Hazel Thompson, an Inupiaq Eskimo from the North Slope of Alaska. This letter is in regard to U.S. Senate bill S.1595. I'd like to express my sincere gratitude for the great concern you display toward the well-being of Alaska Natives. As I read the bill, I gained a deeper understanding as to how our nation, as a whole, shares the responsibility of preserving the Indigenouse cultures of America. The Native people of this country are truly the roots in which our nation stemmed. A people who have managed to survive, despite attempts of cultural destruction, can only be held in the deepest respect. I'M glad to know you acknowledge that.

As an Alaska Native youth, many questions have popped into my mind concerning the survival of my culture. We're said to be the "healing generation," held to the mission of fixing all that's gone wrong. With an array of choices on hand, this mission becomes slightly overwhelming. Your bill came as a relief to me. It touched the core of the social and economic problems, rampant throughout Native America. It is cultural unity in which we lack. This bill doesn't come across as just another attempt from white society to keep Natives dependent upon established government for our well-being. The fact that it will be managed by Natives is refreshing. I predict this will start a trend in which many tribal governments and Native corporations will soon become involved in. I commend you for your understanding. I also encourage the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs to accept the U.S. Senate bill S.1595: Alaska Native Languages Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991. Quayanaqpak!

Sincerely,

Hazel Thompson

avy361

Hazel Thompson
P.O. Box 43
Kaktovik, Alaska   99747

800 Susitna Bay
Wasilla, AK. 99654
October 14, 1991

Dear U.S. Senator Murkowski:

Thank you very much for your letter of October 4,1991 in the interest of S.1595, Alaska Native Language Preservation and Enhancement Act of 1991.

Back when I was a boy in Yukon-Kuskokwim delta when Alaska was a Territory I entered school, not knowing any English but spoke only Yupik Eskimo language. I got into trouble for speaking Eskimo.

Today the Alaska natives are loosing their identity, language and culture; as much as alcohol and drugs and alarming rate of suicides; not long ago there were series in the news papers about Alaska natives with their problems and high suicide rate: what got my attention was those Alaska natives who had lost their culture and identity did commit suicide.

I strongly favor a bill S.1595.

Most sincerely,

Andrew [illegible], Minister retired

P.S. I apologize for not being able to attend [illegible] hearing.

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Grand Camp
Alaska Native Brotherhood

RESOLUTION NO. 69

TITLE: FUNDING - THE PRESERVATION OF NATIVE LANGUAGE

Whereas, Western contact with the Southeast Alaska Native, discouraged the use of the Native tongues of these indigenous people, and

Whereas, This negative influence has left the Haida, Tlingit, and Tsimshian people with but a handful of fluent speakers ranging in age from 50 years - 80 years making the timeline highly critical, and

Whereas, The Southeast Alaska Native languages are at the brink of extinction.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alaska Native Brotherhood and the Alaska Native Sisterhood meeting in convention in Kake, Alaska during the week of October 14 - 20, 1990 urges the members of the Alaska Congressional Delegation and other members of Congress to enact legislation that will provide to the Natives of Southeast Alaska (Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Haida) necessary funding to address the eminent loss of the Southeast Alaska Native languages, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the Alaska Delegation in Washington, D.C., Governor of Alaska, the Alaska Speaker of House, and the President of the Alaska State Senate, and Sealaska Heritage Foundation.

ATTEST: I certify that this resolution was adopted by the ANB/ANS Grand Camp in convention in Kake, Alaska during the week of Oct. 14 - 20, 1990.

Albert Kookesh
Albert Kookesh
Grand President

Andrew Ebona
Andrew Ebona
Grand Secretary

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
ALASKA

COMMITTEES
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE (VICE CHAIRMAN)
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FOREIGN RELATIONS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

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April 29, 1992

Dear Reader:

Due to technical and other difficulties, we were unable to translate all of the comments made in Native languages. However, James Nageak did provide us with a transcript of his own remarks and it was included.

This problem shows how important it is to support Native language preservation. The thoughts of Alaska Natives are too important to be lost because their languages are inaccessible to their own people and others.

Sincerely,

Frank H. Murkowski

Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senator

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